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Homeless Adolescents in Edmonton: A Descriptive Study

by

Jason Brown

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Homeless Adolescents in Edmonton: A Descriptive Study submitted by Jason Brown in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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Dr. E. Jane Drummond

Date: June 26, 1996

Dedication

To the youth whose experiences are shared in these pages.

May your words remind us of the weight of our responsibility for your care.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify the causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents in Edmonton. Homeless youth were asked "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?" and "What do you do to get by?". The statements were sorted into common themes. The sort data were subjected to multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis. In response to the first question regarding the reasons the youth left home, five themes emerged; crime, independence, pushed out, family conflict, and family violence. In response to the second question regarding what the youth do to get by, five themes emerged; personal development, panhandle, social service organizations, support of family/friends, and crime. While there appeared to be considerable agreement between the emergent themes and the literature, differences were noted: reasons for leaving home and adaptive strategies utilized by those participating in the study could not be clearly differentiated between males and females; there was no evidence of sexual abuse as a reason for leaving home among the themes generated. There was a great deal of variability among the causes and adaptive strategies indicated by individual participants; not all individuals participated in all themes.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents in Edmonton. Data obtained from clients of a shelter for homeless youth in Edmonton were objectively analyzed using the concept mapping method (Trochim, 1989a).

To aid in applied research and service initiatives in this time of public accountability it seemed timely to ask youth to describe their experiences so that this knowledge could be systematically used to strengthen existing services, inspire additional creative service initiatives, and to make service gaps for homeless adolescents more visible.

Definitions

The present day image of a homeless adolescent has been associated with running away from home, an activity that has been historically depicted as a common experience of childhood. Nineteenth century images of Huckleberry Finn or Oliver Twist, transient boys of the Depression years, or the "flower children" of the sixties (Libertoff, 1980) connoted to differing degrees the qualities of adventure, mischief, survival, and heroism, and reinforce the notion of "the" runaway youth as an "endearing - if immature - child who has lost his way and who needs to be gathered back into the nest" (Janus, McCormack, Burgess, Hartman, 1987, p.1). The available data have challenged the romanticized image presented by Mark Twain and suggest that a more accurate model describes a variety of images of the causes and experiences of adolescent homelessness. This variety has been exemplified by the wide range of definitions that have been used to identify and study this population.

Runaway and Homeless Youth

The terms "runaway" and "homeless" have been frequently associated in the literature. Runaways have been defined as: youth who leave home without permission, are gone at least one night, and intend to remove themselves from the parent's awareness and control (Garbarino, Wilson, & Garbarino, 1986); youth between 10 and 17 years old, and

leave home without permission at least overnight (Burke & Burkhead, 1989); a person under the age of 18 who has been away from his or her home or legal residence at least overnight, without the permission of the parent or guardian (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1989); youth who leave their homes for more than eight hours without parental permission or leave home with the intent of running away (Brennan, Huizinga & Elliot, 1978; Levine, Metzendorf & VanBoskirk, 1986). Rothman and David (1985) cited the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services definition of homeless adolescents consisting of those with no parental, foster or institutional home and Wiggans (1989) cited the definition of homelessness used by the Department of Health and Social Security in England: those who have no roof or who appear likely to lose their shelter within a month.

The U.S. General Accounting Office (1989) distinguished between runaway and homeless youth by describing runaways as those who had chosen to leave a home to which they can return while homeless youth were those who have no shelter and needed services, however, this distinction has often been blurred in practice (Powers & Jaklitsch, 1993), due to the presence of abusive home situations in the backgrounds of many runaways (Warren, Gary, & Moorhead, 1994), and the running from foster homes and the child welfare system (Ferran & Sabatini, 1985; Raychaba, 1989). Runaways from abusive home situations have often found themselves alone with no home to return to, making them homeless. A large number of youth living on the streets has been considered "system kids" because they may have spent several years in foster care or substitute care where they have experienced frequent disruptions and multiple placements (Cook, 1986) sometimes accompanied by negative experiences with helping agencies (Kurtz, Jarvis, & Kurtz, 1991). When these youth have run away from care prematurely, they have frequently been unprepared for independent living and were homeless.

Subgroup Typologies

Due to the presence of overlapping subgroups among homeless adolescents (Rotheram-Borus, 1991; Shane, 1991) researchers have documented that the term

"runaway" is inadequate and inappropriate (Gullotta, 1978) for the accurate description of these individuals (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992).

Attempts to precisely define the sub-groups present among homeless adolescents have met with some success. Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) distinguished between "runners" and "in and outers". Farber, McCord, Kinast and Faulkner (1984) distinguished between "temporary escapists", "delinquent alienated runaways" and "abused or neglected" youth. Kufeldt and Perry (1989) identified and distinguished between "throwaways", "runaways", "runners", and "runarounds". Kurtz et al. (1991) identified five major types of youths who become homeless: youths who are already members of homeless families; youths who leave home to escape physical and sexual abuse; youths who are thrown or pushed out of their homes by their parents or guardians; youths who are apprehended and placed in inappropriate or unsuitable settings from which they leave; youths who are members of minority groups who have immigrated unaccompanied to the country and are attempting to make themselves inconspicuous. Shane (1991) classified homeless youth according causal factors grouped into five categories: castaways; push-outs or throwaways; abandoned youth; youth and parents who agree to past ways; children who are removed from the home; and youths who cannot be housed within the family which has itself become homeless. Brennan et al. (1978) developed a typology of runaways into seven and finally two broad types: "not highly delinquent, non-alienated runaways" and; "delinquent, alienated runaways". Jones' (1988) typology of runaway youth was based on 16 causative factors grouped into three broad categories: "family dynamics explanations", "personal types", and "a temporal model of runaways".

Homeless Youth

For the purposes of this study a homeless youth was a youth who met the service mandate of the shelter where the participants were residing at the time of the data collection. The shelter program from which the participants were drawn is for youths under the age of 18 years for whom there was no other facility immediately available.

Magnitude of Problem

While homelessness is not a new phenomenon (Hopper & Hamburg, 1986; Momeni, 1989) there has been some agreement that the number of homeless people has increased (Abbott & Blake, 1988) and that the composition of the group has changed over the past 20 years (Stepfl, 1987). The new homeless have been described as a diverse group of adults, individuals and families (Baxter & Hopper, 1984; Committee on Health Care for Homeless People, 1988). However, precise estimates of the numbers of homeless youth have varied widely for several reasons (Kufeldt & Burrows, 1994): definitional inconsistencies both within and between cities; inconsistencies in the way data are kept and reported (i.e. the incomparability of incidence and prevalence estimates); age and geographical boundary inconsistencies; the impossibility of obtaining a representative sample from this population. Despite these difficulties, it was useful to briefly survey several U.S. and Canadian prevalence and incidence estimates.

According to Rotheram-Borus, Koopman, and Ehrhardt (1991) approximately 1.5 million youth aged 11-18 have been estimated to be homeless in the United States. The National Network of Runaway and Youth Services (1988) estimated that as many as two to three million youth between the ages of 10 and 17 lived on the streets in abandoned buildings or in "welfare" hotels.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimated a yearly incidence of approximately .75 to 2 million (Shane, 1991), while Finkelhor, Hotaling, and Sedlak (1990) estimated that approximately 500,000 youth under the age of 18 became runaways and throwaways annually. According to Nye and Edelbrok (1980), one out of every eight children will run away, at least overnight, prior to the age of 18 years. Garbarino et al. (1986) have suggested that 12% of America's youth will run away by the time they are 16.

Appathurai (1988) estimated that about 10,000 children and youth were living on the streets of Toronto in 1987. A study by Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) sampled 12 to 17

year old runaway youth who were located in Calgary's downtown core on each Friday evening over the period of one year; the final sample size was 489.

The national Missing Children's Registry recorded 61,248 missing children reports in 1990; 44,800 of these were reports of runaways (Kufeldt & Burrows, 1994). Smart, Adlaf and Walsh (1991) found that 7.8% of students in Ontario had run away from home and 5.6% had been thrown out in the past year; about 4.8% had run away or been thrown out two or more times. Wong and te Linde (1986) in a random sample of Calgary youth found that 7% of teens had run away and stayed away from home for more than 24 hours at least once. During a one year period between December 1986 and November 1987 in Edmonton, 396 youth under the age of 18 years were reported to the police as missing, approximately 86% or 340, were runaways (Fisher, 1989). It should be noted that missing children reports are not estimates of homeless youth *per se* and no distinction has been made between one-time and repeat runners. Therefore, such estimates have been based on the number of reports, not the number of youth.

Homeless Youth Population: Increasing or Decreasing?

While it appears that the homeless youth population is sizable, there has been debate about whether or not the population is, in fact, growing. Rivlin (1990) suggested that the numbers are increasing, while Finkelhor et al. (1990) have disputed that claim.

Nature and Implications of Adolescent Homelessness

Research into the nature and implications of adolescent homelessness has provided information regarding the causes of homelessness and the adaptive strategies homeless youth utilize. And while there has been no general consensus on the exact descriptive nature of the population nor reliable estimates of its magnitude there has been some agreement that the conditions experienced by youth prior to their homelessness and the experience of homelessness are fraught with obstacles (Kufeldt & Burrows, 1994).

Causes

A substantial quantity of research has been collected into the presumed causes of adolescent homelessness. The research has primarily implicated the roles of personal (Tomb, 1991; Adams & Munro, 1973; Denoff, 1987; Brothers, 1986), family (Stefandis, Pennbridge, MacKenzie, & Pottharst, 1992; Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; McCormack, Burgess, & Gaccione, 1986; Whitbeck & Simons, 1990) and community factors (Levine et al., 1986; Ferran & Sabatini, 1985; Johnson & Carter, 1980), as precursors. It has been suggested that the causes of homelessness are multiple and complex (Rothman, 1991).

Adaptive Strategies

It has not been uncommon for homeless youth to run between family, friends, shelters, institutions, and the streets (Hartmann, Burgess, & McCormack, 1987). According to Garbarino et al. (1986) such experiences have tended to exacerbate and multiply the difficulties experienced by youth prior to leaving home. Major challenges involved procuring shelter and food (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993). The options presented by the street "welfare" system have included selling drugs (Janus et al., 1987), selling sex (MacDonald, 1993), as well as panhandling, shoplifting and theft (Whitbeck, 1993). Some homeless youth reported being employed (Ferguson, 1991) and going to school (Smart & Walsh, 1993).

Concept Mapping Method

Concept mapping provided a means of organizing variables into a series of underlying themes. According to Kunkel (1993), the utility of this approach for the investigation of psychological phenomena has been its ability to apply objective analysis to phenomenological data.

Daughtry and Kunkel (1993) noted that by beginning with individual experience concept mapping allowed for extension beyond researcher-defined categories. The process had combined the credibility of qualitative data with the objectivity and rigor of quantitative analysis. The development of maps regarding youths perceptions of the causes of their

homelessness, and the adaptive strategies they utilize may prove useful for planning interventions for this population as well as for future investigations of relationships between: sub-populations of homeless adolescents in Edmonton and their experiences of homelessness for organizational planning and applied research purposes; the data collected and other demographic predictor or criterion variables of interest to service providers and researchers.

Research Questions

In order to gain a better understanding about the causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents in Edmonton, two questions were examined utilizing the concept mapping technique.

The questions were as follows:

1) What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

2) What do you do to get by?

Organization of Thesis

This thesis is organized into five chapters. The first chapter provide an introduction and overview to the study.

Chapter Two reviews the literature related to variables associated with the causes and adaptive strategies of homelessness. Additionally, a review of the concept mapping literature is presented.

Chapter Three outlines the methods and criteria of youth participating in the study. The data collection and self-report measures employed are described. The methods of data analysis are also described.

Chapter Four contains the results of the investigation, described in two sections. The first section describes the set of statements derived from the interrater agreement process for the first research question. The results of the multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis are discussed to explain the concept map for question one. The findings are related to the existing research. The second section describes the set of statements derived

from the interrater agreement process for the second research question. The results of multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis are discussed to explain the concept map for question two. The findings are related to the existing research.

Chapter Five is a discussion and overall summary of the findings. Results from both research questions are summarized and placed within the context of the literature presented. Study limitations, directions for future research, and practice implications are discussed.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter describes the literature as it relates to the causes and adaptive strategies used by homeless youth. As well, the concept mapping literature is reviewed. The first section integrated and summarizes the findings of research into the presumed causes of adolescent homelessness. The second section describes the adaptive strategies utilized by homeless adolescents. The third section describes the research problem, reviews the concept mapping literature, and states the rationale for its employment in this study.

Causes

Through this century perceptions of adolescents who run away have gone through several developmental changes and points of emphasis. In the early to mid 20th century, running was considered to be a deviant and delinquent act. According to Appathurai (1988) during the 1930's to 1950's and to some extent during the 1960's "...there prevailed a pathology-oriented medical perspective on runaway behavior which focused on the individuals rather than the larger social, economic, and familial factors which shaped the lives of young people" (p.5). Research of the time by Armstrong (1932), Reimer (1940), and Robins and O'Neal (1959) together described the runaway adolescent as antagonistic, surly, defiant, assaultive, distrustful, impulsive, and possessing low intelligence; running away was believed to be related to other forms of delinquency.

Also during the 1960's there was some movement in the way that delinquency was understood; there was a shift in orientation from individual psychopathology toward the structural determinants of criminal behavior (Appathurai, 1991). This was also the decade of the "flower children": middle class youth who left their homes to protest and reject the competitiveness, conformity, and systemization of society. For these youth, running was seen as a healthy personal struggle and collective protest against the norms of an unhealthy society (Kaufman, Allen, & West, 1969). During this period the first research into the familial causes of runaway behavior appeared in the literature; these studies implicated divorce, poverty, poor parental role models, neglect, and family mobility (Leventhal, 1964;

Bakwin & Bakwin, 1966; Robey, Rosenwald, Snell, & Lee, 1964; Shellow, Schamp, Liebow, & Unger, 1967).

The second, third, third revised, and fourth editions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-II, DSM-III, DSM III-R, & DSM IV) (American Psychiatric Association, 1968; 1980; 1987; 1994) have described teenage runaway under a delinquency category: runaway reaction of childhood/adolescence (DSM-II: 308-3); conduct disorder, undersocialized, nonaggressive (DSM-III: 312.10); conduct disorder, undifferentiated type (DSM III-R: 312.90); and conduct disorder (DSM IV: 312.8). Youth in the first diagnostic category were described as timid, immature, feeling rejected by their family, having few friends, and exhibiting inadequate problem-solving abilities (Jenkins, 1969). This diagnosis has been likened to a "flight" as opposed to "fight" (Jenkins, 1971) reaction and was not necessarily unproductive such as in the following examples: a youth "in search" of him/herself or an attempt to find a workable solution to a seemingly unworkable family situation (Gavazzi & Blumenkrantz, 1991). The major criteria for the latter diagnoses included the violation of major age-appropriate societal norms or rules and the failure to establish a normal degree of attachment to significant others; these diagnoses for running behavior were associated with parental non-nurturance and harshness.

Research since the 1970's has continued to look more broadly at antecedents of adolescent homelessness. According to Webber (1991): "Public or expert opinion offer a hopscotch of views as to why kids run away from home. Some see adolescent runaways as incapable, dropping out or running away because of personal inadequacies. Others hold the family unit responsible for the youth's flight from home and school. Still others believe that kids run away because parents neglect or abuse them, and because child-protection agencies fail to mend broken families or to find workable alternatives for their kids. None of these conventional explanations is wrong." (p.33-34). The post 70's literature seemed to support an ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) to the multiple and interconnected causes of this phenomenon. Therefore, this section of the literature review

centers around the personal, family, and community factors identified as antecedents to adolescent homelessness.

Personal Factors

Research into the personal factors apparent in youth who run away revealed two schools of thought: a normal-healthy perspective (Burke & Burkhead, 1989) and what could be called a problems perspective. The former line of thought had fewer proponents than the latter but is a relevant and an important perspective for inclusion in this review. The latter was the more highly developed of the two in the literature, backed by a greater number of studies in this area, and is described in greater detail.

Normal-Healthy Perspective

According to a normal-healthy perspective, running away was a normal and healthy act engaged in by youth having no personal, family or other problems. Two proponents of this approach (Chapman, 1975; Ambrosino, 1971) have suggested that running is a daring and courageous though impulsive act, and that it is a function of a normal adolescent development toward independence and autonomy. Although both proponents described running away as normal and even beneficial to the adolescent, neither was able to supply data to back up such assertions. Empirical data generated by others (Shellow, Schamp, Liebow, & Unger, 1967; Watenburg, 1956; Homer, 1973) suggested that adolescent runaways were searching for adventure, pleasure, or new experiences, and that very few had personal, family, or other problems. The findings of more recent studies (Farber, McCoard, Kinast, & Falkner, 1984; Kennedy, 1991) suggested that some homeless youth have run away in search of pleasure and excitement, but in a small proportion of the total cases surveyed: 20% and 2% of the respective samples. Thus, the normal-healthy perspective may have some descriptive accuracy and utility although in perhaps a much smaller number of present runaway cases than earlier research suggests.

Problem Perspective

A number of variables have been developed in the literature to describe the problematic personal factors that lead young people run away from home. The variables identified and developed include: personality characteristics, poor social relationships, low self-concept, delinquent behavior, school-related problems, substance use, and cognitive factors. Gender differences were apparent.

The categories into which the factors were placed are for the sake of organization and are not intended to imply that they are mutually exclusive or unrelated. In fact, some of the factors have existed in an antecedent or consequential relationship to others.

Personality characteristics. Brennan (1980) listed the following personality characteristics of runaways: low tolerance of frustration, poor impulse control, low self-esteem, and sociopathic personality.

Poor social relationships. Brennan, Huizinga, & Elliot (1978), Brennan (1980) and Adams and Munro (1979) suggested that runaways when contrasted with non-runaway comparison groups maintained weaker family bonds, had poorer relations with peers and teachers, and had stronger feelings of social estrangement and personal alienation. Other studies (Beyer, 1974; Johnson & Carter, 1980; Sommer, 1984; Weiss, 1973) indicated that many runaways reported feelings of loneliness, and isolation. Wolk and Brandon (1977) found that runaways when compared to non-runaways: had greater self-doubt, were more defensive, had more problems with peers, and were less trusting of others. Several studies suggested that runaways experienced significantly less success in interpersonal relationships than non-runaways (Adams & Monroe, 1973; Garbarino & Gilliam, 1984; Wolk & Brandon, 1977; Brennan et al., 1978).

Low self-concept. The self-concept of runaway adolescents has frequently been cited as low (Post & McCoard, 1994). Many homeless youth have been found to: suffer from depression (Adams & Monroe, 1973; Kurtz, Jarvis, & Kurtz, 1991; Wolk & Brandon, 1977; Smart & Walsh, 1993), engage in suicidal behavior (Edelbrock, 1980;

Janus et al., 1987), suffer from anxiety (Wolk & Brandon, 1977) feel insecure (Johnson & Carter, 1980; Wolk & Brandon, 1977; Kurtz et al., 1991), and frequently experience feelings of powerlessness and normlessness (Brennan et al., 1978).

Delinquent behavior. Post and McCord (1994) suggested that the self-concept profile of homeless adolescents described in the previous section is similar to the self-concept profile of delinquents. It should be noted that delinquent behavior was more often the result of the pressure to meet basic needs while a youth is homeless, than being inherent to runaway behavior itself (Cloward & Ohlin, 1966; Elliott & Voss, 1974). However, runaway youth have also identified their own criminal behavior as a cause of leaving home (Brennan et al., 1974; Brennan et al., 1978). Whitbeck and Simmons (1993) found that a smaller proportion of females (11%) to males (34%) in their sample identified "legal troubles" as a reason for running away.

School-related problems. Runaways have often encountered adjustment problems at school (Ferran & Sabatini, 1985). Many were not highly involved in school activities and had a high rate of truancy and school failure (Price, 1989; van der Ploeg, 1989). This frustration has lead to runaway behavior (Angenent & de Man, 1994).

Substance use. Tomb (1991) reported that youth "frequently abuse alcohol and a variety of drugs even before they run from home, further compounding their problems. In fact, substance abuse has been known to occasionally dominate the clinical picture, leading to daily disruptions and generalized failures and resulting in expulsion from the home" (p.1068). Wolk and Brandon (1977) found that runaways when compared to non-runaways had significantly greater rates of alcohol and drug abuse. A study by Smart and Walsh (1993) found that 20% of the 142 homeless youth in their sample reported personal drug use as a cause of their leaving home.

Cognitive factors. It has been suggested that runaway behavior was related to cognitive deficiencies (Angenent & de Man, 1989) and irrational thinking (Denoff, 1987). Brothers (1986) reported that runaways encountered difficulties in analyzing situations and

in formulating appropriate responses. Youth who experienced these difficulties because of either cognitive deficiency or irrational thought had then felt threatened by circumstances they perceived as being beyond their control. As stress increased, such youth have reacted by running away from a situation (Roberts, 1982).

It should be noted that running behavior has also been attributed to an accurate and appropriate appraisal of one's life situation, and engaged in to avoid detrimental circumstances (Aptekar, 1989; Stefanidis, Pennbridge, MacKenzie, & Pottharst, 1992; Radford, King, & Warren, 1989; Silbert & Pines, 1981).

Family Factors

There was substantial evidence to implicate the family on the runaway behavior and homelessness of adolescents (Stefandis, Pennbridge, MacKenzie, & Pottharst, 1992; Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; McCormack, Burgess, & Gaccione, 1986; Whitbeck & Simons, 1990). Several variables were developed in the literature: family breakdown and related re-adjustments, poor family relationships, poor parent child interactions, abuse, domestic violence, parental substance use, and criminal involvement.

Family Breakdown and Related Re-Adjustments

Family breakdown appeared to be a major cause of adolescent homelessness. Some writers (Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; Shane, 1988; Kufeldt & Perry, 1989) have suggested that the societal increases in family breakdown, divorce, remarriage, and single parenting are resulting in increased numbers of runaways. Kufeldt & Burrows (1994) have suggested that exposure to a non-nurturing or actively dangerous family environment could lead to the adaptive youth response of running away. Numerous studies (Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; MacLauren, 1991; Wooden, 1976; Bass, 1992; Rotheram-Borus, Koopman, & Ehrhardt, 1991) have found that young people in care are overrepresented on the street.

Shane (1991) noted that while homeless and runaway youth have tended "to come from all socio-economic strata, racial and ethnic groups, and kinds of families" research

evidence suggested that "they are more likely to come from female-headed, single-parent, or reconstituted families, with many children, particularly step-siblings" (p.5). This assertion was validated by the findings of van der Ploeg (1989), Kufeldt and Perry (1989), and Greenblatt and Robertson (1993) who found that children of divorced parents, single parent, or blended families were highly overrepresented in their samples of homeless youth. Price (1989) based on the findings of Janus, Scanlon, and Price (1984) and Saltonstall (1984) suggested that between 20% to 25% of homeless youth came from intact families.

Farber et al (1984) have succinctly reviewed the precipitating family structure literature and conclude that disruptions to family structure such as the illness of a parent, parental separation, divorce or remarriage, and a family move have been reported by youth to be antecedent events to a runaway incident (Russell, 1981; Brennan, et al., 1978; Nilson, 1981; Hilderbrand, 1968).

Poor Family Relationships

Running away has been associated with poor family relationships (Ambrosino, 1971; Ferran & Sabotini, 1985; Sommer, 1984). The family environments of these youth have frequently been characterized by family conflict and open hostility among members, few enriching experiences (Schweitzer, Hier, & Terry, 1994), and little opportunity for the development of autonomy (Schweitzer et al., 1994; Loeb, Birke, & Boglarsky, 1986). Individual family members have been sometimes made into a scapegoat to cover up dysfunctional family relationships (Beyer, 1974), which placed that individual in a high risk situation for runaway behavior (Angenent & de Man, 1989). Plass and Hotaling (1995) have suggested that parents whose child or adolescent years were characterized by family conflict or abuse, which may have resulted in their own runaway behavior, may actually have created the same family characteristics when interacting with their own children, inadvertently putting them at risk.

Poor Parent-Child Interactions

Poor parent-child interactions have been identified as a causative factor of runaway behavior and adolescent homelessness (Adams, Gullotta, & Clancy, 1985; Novy & Donahue, 1985; Singh, 1984; Wolk & Brandon, 1977). It should be noted that although all youth reported conflicts with their parents, runaway youth reported encountering such conflicts more often and more violently than non-runaways (Homer, 1973).

Runaway youth have often identified "not getting along with parents" (Adams, Gullotta, & Clancy, 1985) as a reason for leaving home. Runaway youth have reported feelings of alienation from their parents (D'Angelo, 1972), inconsistent rules of conduct and discipline (Adams, Gullotta, & Clancy, 1985; Stefandis et al., 1992; Wolk & Brandon, 1977), and a lack of parental support (Wolk & Brandon, 1977). Runaway youth have perceived their parents as being less caring and less responsive to their concerns than non-runaway youth (Schweitzer et al., 1994).

Some runaway youth have left home because of parental rejection (Johnson & Carter, 1980; Brennan et al., 1978; Kufeldt, Durieux, Nimmo, & McDonald, 1992; Kurtz et al., 1991) or excessive criticism (Roberts, 1981). Parents of runaway youth have been perceived by their offspring as emotionally cold (Schweitzer et al., 1994), displaying inadequate love (Brennan et al., 1978), possessing little empathy, and showing little positive regard (Spillane-Grieco, 1984). It should be noted that lack of empathy and positive regard has been found to be on the part of both parents and offspring (Spillane-Grieco, 1984).

Poor parent-child communication has been frequently cited by youth as a reason for leaving home (Opinion Research Corporation, 1976; Chemlinsky, 1982; Kurtz et al., 1991). Additionally, youth have cited unreasonable demands placed on them by parents (Chemlinsky, 1982; Kurtz et al., 1991; Levine, Metzendorf, & VanBoskirk, 1986), and value differences (Blood & D'Angelo, 1974) as reasons for running away.

Gender differences in parent-child interactions. Research evidence into personal causes of running behavior implied the existence of differences in perceived treatment by parental figures by gender, which lead to a stronger negative emotional impact on female runaways than on males. It has been suggested that girls run from home to gain greater security (Kessler & Wieland, 1970) and alternately to find greater autonomy (Reilly, 1978). More recent research (Kammer & Schmidt, 1987; Brennan et al., 1978; Garbarino et al., 1986) has suggested that females characterized parental control as excessive and punitive, while for males it appeared to be a lack or absence of parental control. Kratcoski (1974) found that runaway females had a more severe history of deprivation and neglect than males. It may be that because girls were less likely to run at the first sign of trouble, that they endured more harmful experiences in the home than males would. Rothman (1991) stated that: "(runaway) girls appear to be more acting out and emotionally distraught, suggesting (the need for) more extensive (psycho)therapy" (p.35).

Abuse

Several studies have suggested that a substantial number of youth run away from home because of abuse (Caton, 1986; Farber et al., 1984; Janus et al., 1987; Kurtz et al., 1991; Roberts, 1982). Severe discipline (Wolk & Brandon, 1977) and extensive parental criticism (Roberts, 1981) have also been cited as causes of adolescent homelessness and may be related to physical and emotional abuse.

Studies that investigated the proportion of youth experiencing abuse at the hands of a family member prior to running away from home varied considerably in their estimates. The proportion of homeless youth who have left due to emotional abuse has ranged from 1.5% (Warren, Gary, & Moorhead, 1994) and 2% (Kufeldt et al., 1992) to 20% (Feital, Margetson, Chamas, & Lipman, 1992). The proportion of homeless youth who identified themselves as having left home due to physical abuse ranged from 6% (Kufeldt et al., 1992), 11% (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993), and 30% (Kufeldt & Perry, 1989; Warren et al., 1994), to 43% (Janus, et al., 1987), 65% (Price, 1989), and 67% (McCormack et al.,

1986). The proportion of runaways who reported leaving because of sexual abuse ranged from 1% (Kufeldt et al., 1992), 2% (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993), 7% (Kufeldt & Perry, 1989), and 15% (Warren et al., 1994), to 44% (McCormack et al., 1986), There was considerable overlap among these types of abuse, and experiencing one does not preclude experiencing another; in the samples of homeless youth Warren et al. (1994) and Lopez and Gary (1995) surveyed, 18% and 28% respectively experienced all three types of abuse.

Gender differences in abuse. Gender differences in physical abuse estimates were noted by Feital et al. (1992) and Janus, Archambault, Brown, and Welsh (1995). Eleven per cent and 33% of the males and 22% and 49% of the females in the respective studies reported physical abuse as the reason they left home. Gender differences in sexual abuse estimates were noted by Janus et al. (1995); four per cent of males and 24% of females reported sexual abuse as a cause for running away from home.

Domestic Violence

Runaway youth have cited family violence between parents/caregivers (Brennan et al., 1978; Johnson & Carter, 1980; Kurtz et al., 1991), arguments with parents (Sommer, 1984), and "fighting" with parents and siblings (Kufeldt et al., 1992) as reasons for leaving home.

Parental Substance Use and Criminal Involvement

Both parental substance abuse (Saltonstall, 1984; Price, 1989; Feitel et al., 1992; Lopez & Gary, 1995; Rotheram-Borus, 1991) and criminal involvement (Feitel et al., 1992) have been reported by youth as reasons for running away from home.

Community Factors

Two community factors that the research has suggested have an impact on the runaway behavior of youth were school and social services.

School

Runaway youth have reported that prior to their homelessness, when most were attending school more frequently, that they went to school reluctantly (Price, 1989). About one quarter were regular truants (van der Ploeg, 1989). Related to poor school attendance was low achievement (Levine et al., 1986), which again reinforced truancy. According to Kufeldt et al. (1992), 10% of their sample of homeless youth reported that "problematic involvement with an outside agency" which included school and the police, actually precipitated their running away from home.

Social Services

A large number of youth living on the streets have run from substitute placements (Rotheram-Borus, 1991; Lopez & Gary, 1995; Conte, 1994). Some of these youth have been referred to as "system kids" because they have spent years in care where they have experienced multiple placements and frequent disruptions (Festinger, 1983; Raychaba, 1989). Often they have had negative experiences with helping agencies and adults (Kurtz et al., 1991), causing them to leave prematurely (Kufeldt & Burrows, 1994). Kufeldt et al. (1992) found that 46% of their sample of runaways in Calgary were on the run from Government care.

Adaptive Strategies

The mobility of homeless adolescents between the places they reside is described before turning to the major challenges of homelessness: procuring shelter and food. Homeless youth relied on family and friends, social assistance, youth shelters, and employment to get by. Experiences of adolescents involved in crime on the street involved: selling drugs and sex, as well as theft. Homeless youth also reported panhandling. Gender differences were notable.

Running Around

Many youth who ran, ran frequently. Stein, Frees, and Frost (1994) found that 38% of their sample of homeless youth ran away from home ten times or more with 25%

running between four and nine times. Smart and Walsh (1993) found that 41% of their sample of Toronto street youth ran away from their biological parents four or more times. However, McCarthy and Hagan (1992) found in their sample that 60% ran away less than three times prior to their current street episode.

Youth who have run frequently, ran between family, shelters, institutions, and the street (Hartmann, Burgess, & McCormack, 1987; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). The youth in the Smart and Walsh (1993) study indicated that they had lived at some time: with their biological parents (86%), with adoptive parents (21%), in a foster home (32%), in a group home (41%), with other relatives (48%), and in a detention center (50%). The youth in the Warren et al. (1994) study reported the living arrangement they last ran away; these included: parental home (37%), shelter (21%), foster home (27%), relative (4%), friend (1%), adoptive home (4%), and detention facility (3%).

It should be noted that there was evidence to suggest that for youth who lived on the street, the length of time they spent in that lifestyle was positively related to the number and severity of problems experienced (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992).

Shelter and Food

Procuring shelter was a fundamental task for a youth living on the street. Greenblatt and Robertson (1993) found that the usual sleeping places of their sample were abandoned buildings (33%), outside in the open air (21%), shelters (15%), vehicles (11%), and other places (20%). In the McCarthy and Hagan (1992) study, 60% of the youth interviewed made use of a variety of accommodations since they arrived on the street. Typically these youth stayed with friends and relatives, spent some nights walking the streets or hanging out in all night restaurants; a smaller number slept under bridges, in bus and train stations, in abandoned buildings, in cars, on rooftops of buildings, outside Toronto's City Hall, and in parks (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). Over half of the youth they interviewed had slept in at least three of the following: hostels, friends/relatives, the street, and/or a hotel (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992).

Obtaining food was another major survival issue for homeless youth. Greenblatt and Robertson (1993) found that over half of their sample reported they had nothing to eat on one or more days during the previous month. McCarthy and Hagan (1992) reported that about three quarters of the youth in their sample passed entire days with nothing to eat since leaving home; some reported going without food once or twice (21%), 46% that they went hungry a number of times, and 9% said that they were unable to find food most of the time. These same youth reported that they sometimes bought groceries (3%), relied on friends (4%), ate at fast food restaurants (11%), and ate at shelters (19%); 40% of the youth obtained food through all four sources (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992).

Family and Friends

It should be noted that family was identified by 16% and friends by 50% of the homeless youth surveyed by Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) as people relied on to meet their needs. With respect to friendships made by homeless adolescents on the street, McCarthy and Hagan (1992) found that 94% of the youth they surveyed had made at least one friend, and 88% made at least one close friend.

Social Assistance

The apparent lack of shelter and food for many homeless adolescents implied the need for social assistance. According to McCarthy and Hagan (1992) "the scarcity of shelter, food, and employment suggests that most of those youth surveyed were in need of social assistance; yet, just over one half of those surveyed had received social assistance payments since being on the street" (p. 421). Access to social assistance varied considerably between Canadian provinces; Alberta legislation was altered in 1985 to re-classify 16 to 18 year olds as ineligible for the standard public assistance program (Kufeldt & Burrows, 1994). Thus, in Alberta many street youth were left to access supports only through the child welfare system from which many of them originally ran.

Youth Shelters

Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) found that 6% of the homeless youth they surveyed had their needs met by social services. Clearly there was a need for independent shelters to meet the needs of homeless youth who are often unaware of other community resources and reluctant to engage the child welfare system (Kufeldt et al., 1992).

Employment and School

While day-to-day survival occupied much of the concern of homeless youth, many maintained the hope of obtaining further education and jobs, of returning to their families and establishing families of their own (Ferguson, 1991). It should be noted that in spite of a large number of barriers to employment and education (see Powers & Jaklitsch, 1993) some homeless youth have found jobs and remained in school.

Kufeldt & Nimmo (1987) reported that 8% of their sample of homeless youth met their basic needs through employment. McCarthy and Hagan (1992) reported that 70% of the youth in their sample reported being employed at some time since being on the street, however, only 8% were employed at the time of the survey. A much higher estimate of employment among homeless adolescents was cited by Smart and Walsh (1993) who indicated that 43% of their sample of street youth had worked during the past two weeks.

McCarthy and Hagan (1992) indicated that 20% of the youth they interviewed had returned and were attending school at the time of the survey.

Crime

Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) and Tomb (1991) have suggested that the length of time on the run and the further away from home a youth was the greater the likelihood that s/he has been involved in illegal activity. Kufeldt et al. (1992) found that 69% of the street youth in their sample engaged in illegal and "other" activities to meet their needs. It has been estimated that within one month on the street without other resources, a youth had turned to crime to survive (Hersch, 1988)

Also indicative of the extent to which crime is utilized as an adaptive strategy by homeless youth were the numbers of youth who had involvement with the legal system since arriving on the street for offenses not related to running away. In the McCarthy and Hagan (1992) study, 46% of the youth had been incarcerated at least one since arriving on the street. Shaffer and Caton (1985) found that 63% of homeless youth in their sample had been "in conflict with the law".

Substances. Alcoholism and substance abuse were often normative behaviors for homeless adolescents. The high availability of drugs on the street was one factor that lead to a high degree of use and abuse (Price, 1989). Smart, Adlaf, Walsh, and Zdanowicz, (1994) suggested that street youth and youth who ran away in the past but were currently in school, used all substances including Cannabis, Solvents, Heroin, Cocaine, Crack, LSD, and (heavy) drinking to a greater extent than non-runaway youth. Yates, Mackenzie, Pennbridge, and Cohen (1988) found that 84% of homeless and runaway youth in their study used alcohol and drugs; this is comparable to the 81% found by Kennedy (1991), and the 80% found by McCarthy and Hagan (1992), although lower rates of 50% and 70% were found by Rothman and David (1985) and Shaffer and Caton (1985) respectively. Robertson (1989) suggested that 39% of runaways met the DSM-III criteria for drug abuse, a proportion five times greater than among non-runaways.

The use of drugs may mean involvement in legal activities to afford their procurement (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993). About half of homeless youth had sold drugs for income, 20% to support their own drug use (Robertson, 1989).

Prostitution. A significant proportion of runaway youth became involved in the sex trade (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993). Although male prostitution occurred, female prostitution was much more common (Tomb, 1991; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). About 30% of the youth surveyed by McCarthy and Hagan (1992) indicated that they has worked as prostitutes since leaving home. Often youth reported engaging in "survival sex" in order to gain a place to sleep for the night (Bucy & Nichols,

1991). Feitel et al. (1992) found that 21% of the boys and 5% of the girls in their sample reported engaging in sex for "food, shelter, money, or drugs", a proportion that was comparable to 13% of Forst's (1994) and 25% of Yates' et al. (1988) combined samples. There was the constant threat of assault and exploitation for young people involved in the sex trade (MacDonald, 1993). However, it should be noted that this risk was not confined to those involved in the sex trade (Whitbeck & Simons, 1990; Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993).

High-risk sexual practices were not uncommon among homeless youth. Although such practices were not necessarily confined those involved in the sex trade they were more prevalent among that group (MacDonald, Fisher, Wells, Doherty, & Bowie, 1994). High levels of sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS were reported among homeless youth (Forst, 1994; Rotheram-Borus, 1991; Tomb, 1991). High-risk practices engaged in by homeless youth included: early initiation of sexual activity (Rotheram-Borus, 1991), frequent sexual activity (MacDonald et al., 1994), and unprotected sexual relations with multiple partners (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993).

Theft. Many runaway and homeless youth reported stealing. In McCarthy and Hagan's (1992) sample 47% of the youth surveyed indicated that they had stolen food and 42% had stolen goods worth over $50 since leaving home. Fifty-six per cent of Stein et al.'s (1994) sample indicated that they had stolen or shoplifted since leaving home. Greenblatt and Robertson (1993) reported that 70% of the homeless youth in their sample had stolen, and 47% had broken into homes. Many of the youth in Greenblatt and Robertson's (1993) sample reported being victimized themselves in the previous year: 18% were robbed, and 21% were burglarized. It should be noted that Greenblatt and Robertson (1993) did not ask about criminal behaviors initiated after running away, and therefore, their data might be cause or effect related.

Panhandling

About 2% of the homeless youth surveyed by Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) reported that they met their needs through panhandling.

Statement of the Problem

While previous research has identified a number of causes for and adaptive strategies used by homeless youth in many major cities in the United States and Canada, it appeared that no research had utilized the concept mapping method to identify the reasons that homeless youth saw for leaving home and what they did to get by in Edmonton. Employing the concept mapping methodology to these research questions allowed for the development of descriptive concepts to characterize the perceptions of the homeless youth who participated. It was judged that the absence of research on these questions for homeless adolescents in Edmonton suggested that preliminary experiential data were necessary in order to plan interventions and conduct additional investigations of relationships between sub-populations of homeless adolescents and their experiences of homelessness in this city using the concepts identified by this method as indications of relevant constructs worthy of additional study. The quantitative sorting of the qualitative data collected through the concept mapping method was judged to present an advantage to a purely qualitative analysis for the identification of constructs for future research; bias in the categorization of qualitative data collected was reduced by this method, and added credibility to the constructs identified and their utility in future research.

Concept Mapping

This section presents an overview of the concept mapping methodology and reviews the previous uses of this method in organizational evaluation and planning contexts as well as its recent application to psychological phenomena.

Process

According to Trochim (1989a), there are six major components to the concept mapping process: preparation for the study, generation of statements, structuring of statements, representation of statements, interpretation of maps, and utilization of maps.

To prepare for the concept mapping process two steps were taken: participants were selected, and the focus for conceptualization was selected (Trochim, 1989a). The focus was stated in the form of a question that was posed to the participants.

Participants generated responses to the question during a brainstorming process. Statements were collected from participants until saturation, when no original ideas were being forwarded. Statements were then edited to remove redundancies (Trochim, 1989a) and combined so that the number of statements was no more than 100.

Statements were sorted by either the group who generated the statements or another group. Each statement was printed on a separate card. Complete sets of cards were given to each sorter in random order. Sorters were asked to group the cards "in a way that makes sense" to them (Trochim, 1989a).

The sort data were combined and analyzed by two statistical procedures. Multidimensional scaling placed the statements spatially on a map; their physical proximity to one another represented the degree to which the statements represented were sorted into the same or different piles. Cluster analysis placed the points into clusters representing higher order aggregates of the statements. The products were a point map and cluster map. The point map represented the similarity between each point and the others. The cluster map represented the underlying conceptual categories.

Following the statistical analysis, the clusters were visually inspected and labeled to describe the statements contained therein. The final result was a map of the concepts developed by the analysis of the sorting procedure performed on the original statements.

Applications

Although initially developed for planning and management applications (Trochim, 1989b), concept maps have been used for evaluation, survey design, curriculum development or theory building. In particular, concept maps were useful to describe constructs for the purposes of research, where statements within the clusters have provided direction for the operationalization of a concept.

Concept mapping had been used in a variety of contexts for different purposes. Trochim, Cook, & Setze (1994) described the use of concept mapping for the development of a conceptual framework of the views of the staff of an employment program that served clients with severe mental illness. Dumont (1993) used concept mapping to assess institutionalization and community living from a consumer/survivor perspective. In a 1989 study Galvin used concept mapping to organize a conceptual framework from which a questionnaire was developed for the purpose of evaluation of the One-to-One Big Brother/Big Sister youth program. The concept of feminism was described through the use of concept mapping in a study by Linton (1989). The concept of caring in the field of nursing was conceptualized using the concept mapping method in a study by Valentine (1989).

Although originally used exclusively in evaluation and planning efforts, concept mapping has recently been applied within the field of psychology. The experience of depression (Daughtry & Kunkel, 1993), the beliefs of chronic low back pain sufferers (Knish, 1994), the dysfunctional beliefs of battered women (Deby, 1993), and wives adaptation to husbands with brain injuries (Lacene, 1996) have been described through the concept mapping method.

Application to Current Research

It appeared that no studies have been conducted to identify the reasons that homeless youth saw for leaving home and what they did to get by in Edmonton. Concept mapping allowed for the study of constructs from the bottom up, that is, as they were

identified by the participants, and not prescribed by the researchers. A strength of this method is that it combined the credibility of qualitative data with the objectivity and rigor of quantitative analysis. The use of many sorters in the process mitigated against the potential bias that a single researcher could bring to the analysis of these qualitative data. The maps described quickly and visually describe a large amount of qualitative and quantitative data. The concepts developed were useful for planning interventions for this population and provided the foundation for future research.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies as perceived by homeless adolescents in Edmonton using the concept mapping method. Concept mapping involved the application of quantitative analysis on phenomenological data. The present study utilized data collected from clients of a shelter for homeless youth in Edmonton during face-to-face interviews with the researcher. Participants were asked for the reasons that they see for leaving home and what they do to get by.

Concept Mapping

According to Trochim (1989a), there were six major components to the concept mapping process. The first step generated responses to a particular question asked to a specified group of participants. Second, these responses were edited for clarity and to eliminate redundancies. In this study an interrater agreement process was used. Third, the statements were sorted into piles of like statements. The piles were considered to represent general themes. Fourth, two types of statistical analysis were applied to the sorting of the statements to describe the relationship between statements and their groupings. A decision was made regarding the optimal number of concepts for a particular map. Fifth, the major concepts were identified according to the contents of the cluster. Sixth, the map was used for its intended purpose.

The first four steps were particularly relevant to this chapter. The concept solution selected for the data in the study is presented in Chapter Four, the results chapter, along with the fifth step, where the two maps, the concept solutions, their constituent statements, and the concept labels are presented and discussed along with their relationship to the existing literature. The sixth step is addressed in more detail in the discussion chapter, Chapter Five, where the practice implications that follow are discussed.

Preparation

To prepare for the concept mapping process two steps were taken: participants were selected, and the focus for conceptualization was determined (Trochim, 1989a). The following sections outline the participants and research instruments used in the study.

Participants. Participants were clients of an Edmonton shelter for homeless youth. Clients of the shelter were youth under the age of 18 years for whom there was no other facility immediately available. Participants were living at the shelter at the time of the interview and agreed to participate in the study. Of the 13 participants interviewed, six were female and seven were male. The study underwent ethical review by the Department of Educational Psychology's ethics review committee, and was approved by the Acting Executive Director of the participating agency.

Research instrument and questions. The face-to-face interview consisted of two open-ended questions: "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?", and "What do you do to get by?". From these questions a total of 126 statements were collected.

Information was collected through in-person interviews because of the potential for limited responses in some cases due to low writing ability. Additionally, it was judged that youth may be more willing to share and not exaggerate personal details if asked individually rather than as a group.

Generation of Statements

Participants generated responses to the question or focus of discussion. Ideally, these statements represent the entire domain of interest (Trochim, 1989a). Statements were edited for clarity and to remove redundancies (Trochim, 1989a) in the study by using an interrater agreement process.

Interrater agreement process. The initial 126 statements were broken down as follows (see Appendix A); females generated 32 and 23 statements in response to question one and two respectively; males generated 58 and 23 statements in response to question one and two respectively.

The statements were then reviewed for redundancy as well as edited and/or modified for clarity by the researcher and a Ph.D. psychologist experienced in the area of concept mapping and adolescent psychology. This process reduced the number of statements used in the analysis by 11 (see Appendix B). The females' responses were edited down to 27 and 21 statements for question one and two respectively. The males' responses were edited down to 54 and 23 statements for question one and two respectively.

Because there appeared to be few apparent gender differences between the responses to either question, the groups were combined for the purposes of analysis. Because data were collected until the absence of new information was detected by the researcher, it was necessary for the order in which interviews took place to be randomized to prevent a gender bias in the data. For each question, the researcher used a table of random numbers to select the order in which interviewee statements were added to the list of statements. Statements were then added to this list in random order until saturation occurred. The resulting lists of statements included 75 and 36 statements for questions one and two respectively.

Structuring of Statements

Trochim (1989) cited Rosenberg and Kim's (1975) method for the sorting of statements obtained from participants: an unstructured card sorting procedure. Each statement was printed on a separate card. Complete sets of cards were given to each sorter in random order. Sorters may or may not have been the participants who generated the statements. Sorters were given instructions on the boundaries within which they may sort the statements into piles. According to Trochim (1989a) sorters were to group the cards "in a way that makes sense" to them according to the following criteria: "each statement can only be placed in one pile (i.e., an item cannot be placed in two piles simultaneously); all statements cannot be placed in a single pile, and; all statements cannot be put into their own piles (although some items may be sorted by themselves" (p.5). One or more sorters may

sort the same cards several times or several sorters may each sort the cards once (Trochim, 1989a).

Due to the difficulty obtaining the original participants for the purposes of sorting, the sorters for this study were 17 human service professionals. Of the 17 sorters, 10 were female and seven, male. A complete set of statements for the two questions was given to each sorter along with instructions. Sorters were instructed to follow the outlined procedure for each set of cards separately: read through the cards in the stack; sort the cards into piles in a way that makes sense to you (place similar statements together into the same pile); record the sorting information on the back of the instruction page before returning it to the researcher (see Appendix D). The written instructions were accompanied by a verbal description of the nature and purpose of the research and assurance of their anonymity and right to withdraw participation at any time. Sorters were verbally instructed that the return of their sorts to the researcher would be confirmation of their consent to participate.

Representation of Statements

The conceptual domain was analyzed by two distinct statistical procedures and was followed by a decision regarding the optimal number of concepts for the final solution. Multidimensional scaling placed the statements spatially on a map; their physical proximity to one another represented the degree to which the statements were sorted into the same or different piles. Cluster analysis placed the points into clusters representing higher order aggregates of the statements. The most appropriate number of concepts was left to the discretion of the researcher who can utilize bridging index values to assist in the decision. The study utilized the Concept System (Trochim, 1987), a computer program that performed the statistical analysis and constructed the concept maps.

Multidimensional scaling. According to MacCallum (1988) the purpose of multidimensional scaling was to "represent and provide a basis for understanding the structure inherent in certain types of data involving judgments about stimuli" (p. 421). In concept mapping this multivariate analysis was performed on the sort data to determine the

spatial relationship between the generated statements. A proximity matrix was created by the sorting task. This matrix could have been represented in as many dimensions as distances between the items in the matrix. In concept mapping, the multidimensional scaling used a two-dimensional solution where the points were placed in a bivariate distribution which made them suitable for placement on an X-Y graph (Trochim, 1989a).

Spatial placement of points was determined by the frequency with which the items were included in the same or different piles by the sorters. Each statement was placed on a map, called a point map (Trochim, 1989a). Statements that were closer together were more likely to be sorted into the same piles more frequently. Statements that were far apart were more likely to be sorted into different piles more frequently. The points on this map were representative of the original proximity matrix.

Cluster analysis. A second analysis was performed on the map data to represent the conceptual domain (Trochim, 1989a). This analysis was called hierarchical cluster analysis (Anderberg, 1973; Everitt, 1980). Cluster analysis utilized the multidimensional scaling X-Y coordinate values for each point, and grouped statements on the map into clusters which were intended to represent underlying themes.

According to Borgen and Barnett (1987) and Lorr (1983) Ward's (1963) minimum variance technique is a widely used agglomerative hierarchical technique in the behavioral sciences. Aldenderfer and Blashfield (1984) and Blashfield and Aldenderfer (1988) submitted that Ward's was one of the most effective cluster analysis methods available for recovering underlying structure. To minimize the variance with clusters at each stage of grouping, each statement was initially treated as its own cluster. At each stage statements were joined by merging individual and grouped statements which resulted in the least increase in the within-groups sums of squares. In the end, all statements combined to form a single cluster. While the method maximized the homogeneity within clusters, this homogeneity was diminished as the clusters grew in size because once merged, statements

were not separated. Trochim (1989a) described the utility of Ward's method as one that "generally gave more sensible and interpretable solutions than other approaches" (p.8).

Number of concepts. The decision regarding the most appropriate number of concepts was based on both a best conceptual and statistical fit between the statements and the concepts.

For example, Trochim (1989a) suggested that for a map of 100 statements one should begin by examining cluster solutions between about 20 and 3. Trochim (1989a) suggested that if the decision about the most appropriate number of clusters is errant at all it should be on the side of more rather than fewer clusters.

The bridging index was a value between zero and one that indicated the relationships between a point and the others on the map. In general, the closer the value was to one for a particular statement, the more often that statement was sorted with statements in other regions of the map. As the value approached zero, the more likely that statements were sorted with those others situated in its area. Average bridging indices for clusters indicated the coherence of the constituent statements (Trochim, 1987), and the lower the index value for a statement the more prominent it was to the theme represented by the cluster.

Interpretation of Maps

Following the statistical analysis, the clusters were visually inspected and labeled to represent the constituent statements of which they are comprised. The map became a visual summary of the conceptualization process (Trochim, 1989a).

Utilization of Maps

Although most frequently utilized for planning and management applications (Trochim, 1989b), concept maps have been be used for evaluation, survey design, curriculum development or theory building. In particular, concept maps have been useful to describe constructs for the purposes of research, where statements within the clusters have provided direction for the operationalization of a concept.

Summary of Study Methodology

The methodology employed in the study began with a series of statements gathered from participants who resided at a shelter for homeless youth in response to two questions: "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?" and "What do you do to get by?" These statements were edited for clarity and redundancy. Because it appeared that there were few gender differences, the responses were combined. A group of human service professionals were asked to sort the statements according to the statement similarities. The Concept System (1989c) performed the statistical analyses on the sorting data. The next chapter presented the results of this analysis: concept maps for question one and two.

CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents in Edmonton using the concept mapping method. An analysis of the data obtained from clients of a shelter for homeless youth in Edmonton was presented. The results of the analysis are presented in two sections, one for each research question: "What are the reasons that you see for leaving home?" and "What do you do to get by?" Each section begins with a description of the statements derived from the interrater agreement process and is followed by the results of the multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis. The results of the statistical analyses are discussed to explain the respective concept maps. The study findings are related to research cited in the literature.

Question One: What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

The statements generated in response to this question were originally collected by gender. Thirty-two and 58 statements were reported for females and males respectively (see Appendix A); through the interrater agreement process, the numbers of responses decreased to 27 for females and 54 for males (see Appendix B). When no gender differences seemed apparent in the data, the two groups of statements were combined in random order. When edited again for redundancies, the final list consisted of 75 statements. These statements are presented in Table 4.1.

The 75 statements were sorted into piles by 17 human service professionals consisting of 10 females and seven males. The sorters were asked to place statements into piles that made sense to them. These sort data were analyzed using multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis.

Table 4.1: 75 Statements Derived from the Interrater Agreement Process for "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?"

Statement
because I was getting into trouble
shoplifting
smoking dope
time to get away from each other
separately work things out before it becomes a bigger problem
I got kicked out
I got into too much trouble with the law
theft charges
my drug use
I never got along with my mom
my family
my dad is an alcoholic
my mom and I hate each other
my mom and dad fight
my dad hit me
my dad drinks too much
my mom and dad are going through a separation
abuse
hitting with whatever they could get hold of
put-downs
shut-downs
religious differences

my mom was an extremist Christian

drugs in the home

a lot of conflict between my mother and I

I moved in with my friend and it didn't work out

my mom's husband does pot and stuff openly

me and my mom fight about everything

I wouldn't do my chores, or I'd do them late

keeping my shoes on in the house

me and my mom would fight about money

I had a job and was paying rent, I quit and my mom got real mad

I didn't get along with my sister

my mom would rather have my sister around than me

my mom got angry and started throwing stuff

I got angry and started punching stuff

my dad's girlfriend did not want me around

me and my mom, we'd always yell and hit

my mom tried to control me

I like to do my own thing

sometimes I'd get mad over little things

it's hard to be around my mom and sister for long

my parents could not deal with me

my parents could not deal with my negative acting out

in grade six I was selling salt and passing it off as drugs

stealing money from my mom

getting drunk

my mom hardly knew where I was

my mom called the cops on me a lot

starting fires

selling drugs

breaking into homes

my mom used to cut me down a lot

my mom stopped hitting me when I got too big for her

my parents pushed me out because they didn't want me

my parents were emotionally abusive

I was always a bad kid

I got into fist fights with my mom

my mom and I tried to kill each other once

me and my dad and my sister do not get along whatsoever

when I got into trouble I'd get hit

I got into an argument with my step-dad

my step-dad came home and started pushing me around

me and my step-dad have had arguments

I don't feel safe there

my mom kicked me out

my drug addiction

my mom and I just fought all the time

I got kicked out of school

I stole alcohol from my place and gave it to minors

I was dealing drugs

I kept on stealing from home, and anywhere else

I was beating up people

I was involved in a lot of criminal acts

I chose to leave home

Data Analysis

Multidimensional scaling. The initial bit map of the 75 statements generated for question one was presented in Figure 4.1. The concept map of those statements was presented in Figure 4.2. Each of the 75 statements was represented as a point on the map. The placement of the points was derived from the MDS solution; their physical proximity to one another represented the degree to which the statements were sorted into the same or different piles by the 17 human service professionals. Statements sorted into the same piles more frequently were closer to one another on the map than statements that were sorted into different groupings. A cluster analytic technique was performed on the MDS solution to assist in defining themes apparent in the data.

Cluster analysis. Hierarchical cluster analysis was performed on the data in order to group statements into clusters that presumably reflect the underlying concepts. The naming of clusters was influenced by both statistical and conceptual considerations. It was advisable to begin with large number and reducing each successive solution by one concept until the most appropriate number of clusters was determined. Trochim (1989a) has suggested when examining a set of statements that is less than 100, to examine all cluster solutions between 20 and three; each successive grouping was suggestive and was visually inspected to determine if the grouped statements were indeed reflective of some concept (Trochim, 1989a). Because the MDS results were held constant in the manipulation of concepts, the selected solution had no overlapping clusters.

The "bridging index" was a statistical method that the researcher utilized in determining the most appropriate number of concepts. This value between 0 and 1 was the weighted average of the distances between the item and all other items on the map. A higher value indicated that the item was more likely a "bridge" that had been sorted with various statements in different areas of the map while a low value indicated that it had been sorted primarily with the statements that were close to it on the map. Trochim (1987) noted that the placement of an item with a high bridging index may be misleading; an item that was

sorted with equal frequency between two groups of statements had the potential to be placed between the groups and had not conceptually fit with the statements that immediately surrounded it. An average bridging index was also computed for each cluster. Lower average bridging indices suggested greater coherence of the constituent statements (Trochim, 1987). Statements with lower bridging indices were often indicative of the general concept area represented by the cluster (Trochim, 1987).

The final cluster solution for the concept map for question one was determined by the author with the assistance of the Ph.D. psychologist who was part of the interrater agreement process that resulted in the final 75 statements. The decision regarding the most appropriate number of clusters was based on the conceptual fit of the statements within the various cluster solutions generated, and the items contributing most to the uniqueness of each cluster using the average and individual bridging indices. Cluster solutions from 15 to three were considered and a solution of five clusters was considered to be the most appropriate for question one.

Concept Map for Question One: What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

The 15 cluster solution appeared fragmented with no clear themes apparent. By reducing the number of clusters by one, additional solutions were examined. Insignificant changes were introduced at each successive map. However, reducing the nine cluster solution (reproduced in Appendix D) to five collapsed clusters one and two; three, four and five, and; seven and eight. Further reductions to a four concept solution resulted in the combination of "Pushed Out" with "Family Conflict" while the three concept solution (reproduced in Appendix D) combined "Pushed Out" and "Family Conflict" with "Family Violence". Both the four and three concept solutions appeared to be overgeneralized and therefore less useful. The five concept solution (see Figure 4.2) whose items and bridging index values appear in Table 4.2 appeared to provide the best interpretability.

Table 4.2: Cluster Items and Bridging Values for Concept Map of "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?"

Cluster and Statement	Bridging Index
Cluster #1 - Crime	0.12
because I was getting into trouble	0.21
I was beating up people	0.17
stealing money from my mom	0.24
shoplifting	0.00
breaking into homes	0.00
I got into too much trouble with the law	0.02
I was involved in a lot of criminal acts	0.03
theft charges	0.03
I kept on stealing from home, and anywhere else	0.03
starting fires	0.02
smoking dope	0.12
getting drunk	0.16
my drug use	0.14
my drug addiction	0.14
sometimes I'd get mad over little things	0.35
I got angry and started punching stuff	0.26
I was always a bad kid	0.49
in grade six I was selling salt and passing it off as drugs	0.05
selling drugs	0.06
I was dealing drugs	0.05
I got kicked out of school	0.13

I stole alcohol from my place and gave it to minors	0.05
Cluster #2 - Independence	0.75
time to get away from each other	0.95
shut-downs	1.00
religious differences	0.76
my dad is an alcoholic	0.50
my dad drinks too much	0.50
my mom's husband does pot and stuff openly	0.55
separately work things out before it becomes a bigger problem	0.98
I like to do my own thing	0.84
drugs in the home	0.65
keeping my shoes on in the house	0.72
I moved in with my friend and it didn't work out	0.77
I chose to leave home	0.74
Cluster #3 - Pushed Out	0.42
I got kicked out	0.43
my parents could not deal with my negative acting out	0.45
I wouldn't do my chores, or I'd do them late	0.44
my mom called the cops on me a lot	0.54
I had a job and was paying rent, I quit and my mom got real mad	0.41
I got into fist fights with my mom	0.41
my mom kicked me out	0.34
my parents could not deal with me	0.37
my mom hardly knew where I was	0.42
Cluster #4 - Family Conflict	0.14
I never got along with my mom	0.10
it's hard to be around my mom and sister for long	0.15

me and my mom fight about everything	0.08
my mom and I just fought all the time	0.08
me and my mom would fight about money	0.08
my mom and I hate each other	0.08
a lot of conflict between my mother and I	0.09
my mom tried to control me	0.16
my family	0.19
I didn't get along with my sister	0.13
my mom would rather have my sister around than me	0.14
me and my dad and my sister do not get along whatsoever	0.15
my mom got angry and started throwing stuff	0.13
me and my mom, we'd always yell and hit	0.12
my mom and I tried to kill each other once	0.13
when I got into trouble I'd get hit	0.30
my dad's girlfriend did not want me around	0.22
I got into an argument with my step-dad	0.16
me and my step-dad have arguments	0.16
Cluster #5 - Family Violence	0.23
my mom and dad fight	0.31
my mom and dad are going through a separation	0.36
my mom was an extremist Christian	0.41
abuse	0.31
I don't feel safe there	0.27
put-downs	0.31
my dad hit me	0.13
my step-dad came home and started pushing me around	0.12
hitting me with whatever they could get a hold of	0.11

my parents were emotionally abusive	0.13
my mom used to cut me down a lot	0.15
my mom stopped hitting me when I got too big for her	0.12
my parents pushed me out because they didn't want me	0.26

Cluster one: Crime. Cluster one was representative of the concept of crime, and included several elements. Generic statements such as "because I was getting into trouble", "I got into too much trouble with the law", "I was involved in a lot of criminal acts", and "I was always a bad kid" were suggestive of the general concept of crime while theft, drug selling, and substance using were reflected by other statements contained in this cluster. The presence of theft was revealed by the statements such as: "stealing money from my mom" and "I kept on stealing from home and anywhere else". Drug selling was indicated by several statements like: "I was dealing drugs". The use of substances was revealed in statements such as: "smoking dope" and "my drug addiction".

Anger issues were revealed in the statements: "sometimes I'd get mad over little things", and "I got angry and started punching stuff". Other antisocial acts were represented, including: "starting fires", "breaking into homes", and "I was beating up people". The statement: "I got kicked out of school" may have represented the effect of the other behaviors by its inclusion in this concept. In terms of bridging index, this cluster attained the lowest average bridging values indicating that most of the items were not sorted with other clusters.

Cluster two: Independence. The general theme of independence of the youth from parents was suggested by several statements including: "time to get away from each other", "separately work things out before it becomes a bigger problem", "I like to do my own thing", and "I chose to leave home". Issues around parental substance abuse were also revealed in this cluster in statements such as: "my dad is an alcoholic", and "my mom's boyfriend does pot and stuff openly".

The statement "religious differences" seemed be related to value differences that may influence a youth's perception of a need for separation. "Shut-downs" suggested the presence of emotional abuse, which was considered by a youth as a reason to seek independence from parental influence. The statement "keeping my shoes on in the house" suggested the presence of other factors in the personal or family systems as reasons why a youth would leave home. Its high bridging value (0.75) suggested that it was sorted with a number of different groupings of statements, and its meaning suggested that it was perhaps more related to the themes in clusters four and five than two. In terms of bridging index, this cluster attained the highest average bridging value, which suggested that several of the items were sorted with nearby clusters.

Cluster three: Pushed out. Several statements in this cluster reflected the active urging or coercion of the parents as reasons why a youth would leave home. Statements such as: "I got kicked out", "my mom kicked me out", reflected the central theme while others suggested reasons why parents pushed out their children: "my parents couldn't deal with my negative acting out", "my parents could not deal with me", "I had a job and was paying rent, I quit and my mom got real mad", " I wouldn't do my chores, or I'd do them late", " my mom hardly knew where I was", "I got into fist fights with my mom", and "my mom called the cops on me a lot". This cluster attained the second highest average bridging value which indicated that some of the items in the cluster were sorted with nearby clusters.

Cluster four: Family conflict. High degrees of family conflict seemed to be reflected in many of the statements in this cluster. Statements such as " I never got along with my mom" and "me and my dad and my sister do not get along whatsoever", "me and my mom fight about everything", and " a lot of conflict between my mother and I" indicated the presence of a general inability to relate effectively. Other statements such as "my mom got angry and started throwing stuff" and "me and my mom, we'd always yell and hit" indicated the presence of violent incidents. Other statements suggested the presence of blended families that may be related to the experience of family conflict: "my dad's

girlfriend did not want me around" and "me and my step-dad have arguments". Clusters four and five were very close on the map which suggested the presence of similar constituent statements. This cluster attained the second lowest average bridging value which indicated that few of the items in the cluster were sorted with other clusters.

Cluster five: Family violence. Statements in this cluster reflected the presence of abuse and between-parent conflict. Statements included reference to physical abuse: "hitting me with whatever they could get hold of" and "my step-dad came home and started pushing me around". The presence of emotional abuse was also apparent: "my parents were emotionally abusive" and "my mom used to cut me down a lot". Parental conflict was also raised in this cluster with the statements: "my mom and dad fight" and "my mom and dad are going through a separation".

The statement "my mom was an extremist Christian" appeared to be less central to the primary theme of this cluster, unless perhaps there was an association between "extremist Christian" and particularly punitive means of child management. The statement "my parents pushed me out because they didn't want me" may have been related to parental conflict and the perception of a youth that parents had enough to worry about besides her/himself. Clusters four and five were very close on the map and suggested the presence of similar constituent statements. This cluster attained the middle average bridging value which suggested that some items were sorted with nearby clusters, most notably, cluster four.

Figure 4.1: Point Bit Map of 75 Statements for Question One:

What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

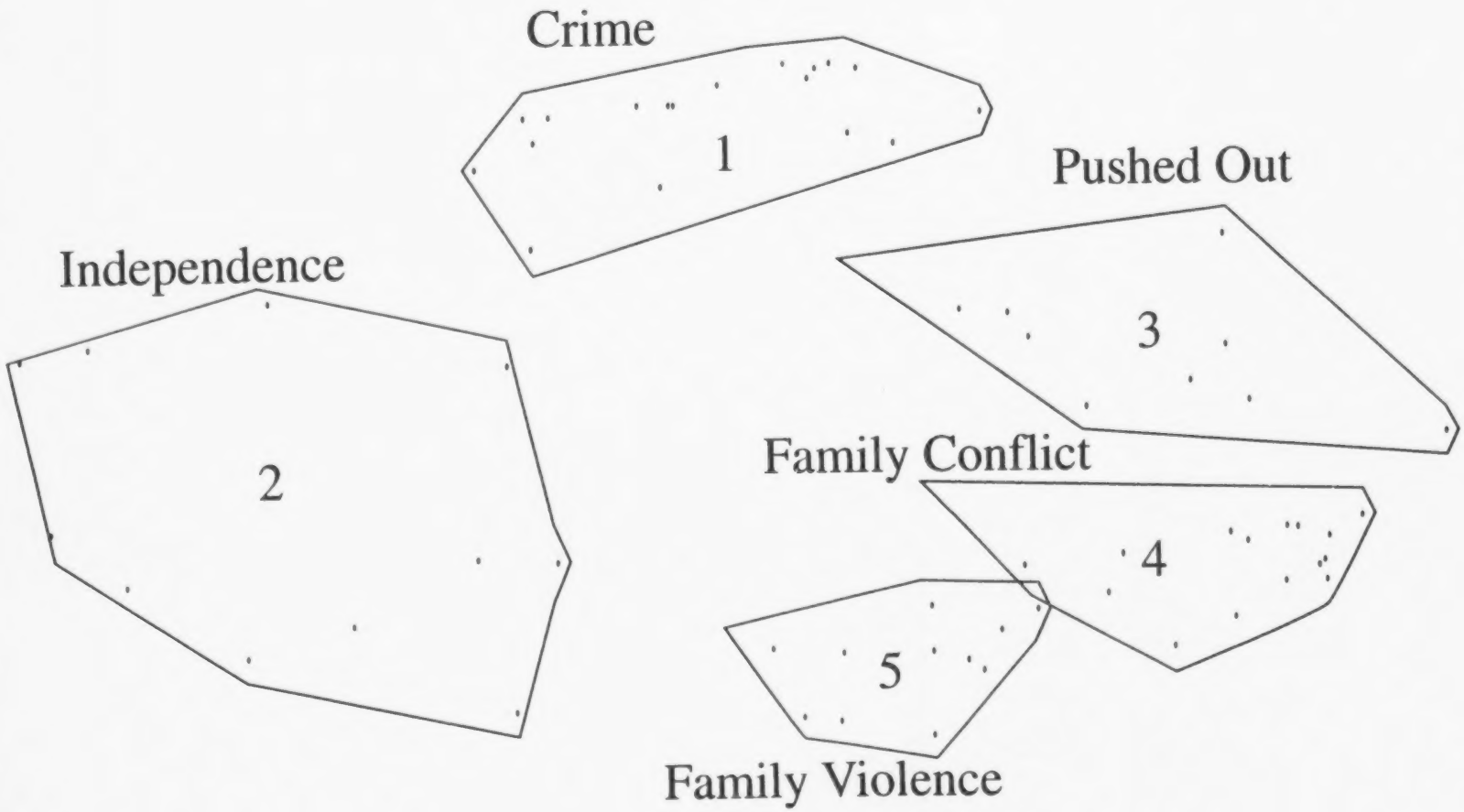

Figure 4.2: Concept Map of 75 Statements for Question One:

What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

Discussion: Concept Map for Question One

In relation to the first question "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?" the following general themes were apparent on the concept map. The first general theme indicated the presence of criminal activity on the part of the youth her/himself. The youth indicated involvement in theft, drug selling, and substance using. The second general theme suggested the desire or causes for the youths independence from, or the need for separation from her/his parents, due, for some, to parental substance abuse and value differences. The third general theme reflected the presence of active urging or coercion by parents as reasons why these youth left home, with some indication of the reasons for the precipitating events. The fourth theme reflected high degrees of verbal and physical family conflict between stepparent and youth, parent and youth, and between siblings. The fifth general theme indicated the presence of emotional and physical abuse as reasons why the youth left home.

Relationship to Previous Research

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents in Edmonton using the concept mapping method. This was done by analyzing the data obtained from clients of a shelter for homeless youth in Edmonton. Question one: "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?", resulted in a concept map with five cluster themes. The five clusters/themes included: crime, independence, pushed out, family conflict, and family violence. In the following section, the results of the study are discussed and placed within the literature. The themes and their sub-themes were consistent with the literature on the causes of adolescent homelessness.

Cluster one: Crime. Some of the youth indicated that their involvement in crime was what precipitated their leaving home. Several areas of criminal involvement were reported by the youth including: vandalism, theft, drug selling, and substance using as reasons why

they left home. Having been kicked out of school was also reported and included in this cluster.

The involvement of youth in criminal activities had been reported more frequently in the context of an effect rather than a cause in the homelessness literature, however, the literature suggested that aggressive behaviors, often criminal, such as stealing, arson, destruction of property, and physical fights were reported frequently among youths who ended up on the street and likely present in their behavioral repertoire prior to leaving home (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993). Engaging in theft had been reported in the literature as a coping strategy during homelessness, however, it was also identified by youth as a reason they left home (Brennan et al., 1978). The selling of substances has been frequently associated with use by adolescents who became homeless (Robertson, 1989); the literature on substance use suggested that homeless youth had identified their drug use as a reason for leaving home (Smart & Walsh, 1993).

It had been noted (Angenent & de Man, 1994) that frustration in school, often associated with truancy and failure (Price, 1989; van der Ploeg, 1989), had lead to runaway behavior.

Cluster two: Independence. Some of the youth indicated that they wished for separation or independence from their parents. The literature that suggested that some youth run from home in search of independence (Chapman, 1975; Ambrosino, 1971). The statements included in this cluster suggested that problems were associated with leaving home such as: parental substance abuse, value differences, and problems around household rules of conduct.

Parental substance abuse had been cited frequently in the literature as a reason identified by youth why they left home (Saltonstall, 1984; Price, 1989; Feitel et al., 1992; Lopez & Gary, 1995; Rotheram-Borus, 1991). While the issue of value differences was identified in the literature directly (Blood & D'Angelo, 1974), some studies (Schweitzer et al., 1994; Loeb et al., 1986) have suggested that a closed family that is highly resistant to

outside influences may allow for little development of autonomy which may restrict independent thinking and the ability to sustain value differences between parents and their children within the family. As well, some youth reported inconsistent rules of conduct and discipline as reasons that they leave home (Adams et al., 1985; Stefandis et al., 1992; Wolk & Brandon, 1977).

Cluster three: Pushed out. The literature suggested that youth left home because they felt as though they are being rejected by their parents (Johnson & Carter, 1980; Kufeldt et al., 1992; Kurtz et al., 1991). The youth in this study also indicated that they were not following their parents' rules of proper conduct.

While youth have reported unreasonable parental demands (Chemlinsky, 1982; Kurtz et al., 1991; Levine et al., 1986), and inconsistent rules of conduct and discipline as reasons that they left home (Adams et al., 1985; Stefandis et al., 1992; Wolk & Brandon, 1977. While parents had been described by some runaway youth as possessing little empathy and showing little positive regard (Spillane-Grieco, 1984), it should be noted that this lack of empathy and positive regard was found to be apparent in both parents and offspring (Spillane-Grieco, 1984).

Cluster four: Family conflict. Participants suggested that they were unable to "get along" and they would "fight" with their parents, stepparents, and siblings. There was also the indication that due to family restructuring, one youth felt like s/he was no longer wanted.

Not "getting along" with parents (Adams et al., 1985), "arguments" with parents (Sommer, 1984) and "fights" with parents (Kufeldt et al., 1992) have been identified by youth as reasons they left home. The literature suggested that a number of family issues were related to the experience of conflict and frequently, open hostility among members (Schweitzer et al., 1994). Runaway youth reported feelings of alienation from their parents (D'Angelo, 1972), and a lack of parental support (Wolk & Brandon, 1977). As well, poor

parent-child communication was frequently cited by youth as a reason for leaving home (Opinion Research Corporation, 1976; Chemlimsky, 1982; Kurtz et al., 1991).

The literature suggested that family breakdown was a major cause of adolescent homelessness. Some writers (Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; Shane, 1988; Kufeldt & Perry, 1989) have suggested that the societal increases in family breakdown, divorce, remarriage, and single parenting have resulted in increased numbers of runaways. Van der Ploeg (1989), Kufeldt and Perry (1989), and Greenblatt and Robertson (1993) found that children of divorced parents, single parent, or blended families were highly overrepresented in their samples of homeless youth. Such changes resulted in a decreased commitment to the youth by parents and may be perceived by youth as parental rejection (Kufeldt et al., 1992).

Cluster five: Family violence. Youth indicated that conflict between parents and emotional and physical abuse by parents were reasons why they left home. It should be noted that despite substantial support in the literature for the presence of sexual abuse as a reason why some youth leave home, none of the participants in the present study reported this experience.

The literature confirms the presence of parental conflict as a reason some youth indicated for why they left home (Brennan et al., 1978; Johnson & Carter, 1980; Kurtz et al., 1991).

Several studies have indicated that a substantial number of youth report leaving home because of abuse (Caton, 1986; Farber et al., 1984; Janus et al., 1987; Kurtz et al., 1991; Roberts, 1982). Studies investigating the proportion of youth experiencing abuse at the hands of a family member prior to running away from home vary considerably but there was strong support in the literature for the existence of emotional (Warren et al., 1994; Kufeldt et al., 1992; Feital et al., 1992), physical (Kufeldt et al., 1992; Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993; Kufeldt & Perry, 1989; Warren et al., 1994; Janus, et al., 1987; Price, 1989; McCormack et al., 1986), and sexual abuse (Kufeldt et al., 1992; Greenblatt &

Robertson, 1993; Kufeldt & Perry, 1989; Warren et al., 1994; McCormack et al., 1986), as self reported reasons why they left home.

Question Two: What do you do to get by?

The statements generated in response to this question were originally collected by gender. Twenty-three statements were reported by each group of females and males (see Appendix A); through the interrater agreement process, the numbers of responses decreased to 21 for females and remained the same for males (see Appendix B). When no gender differences seemed apparent in the data, the two groups of statements were combined in random order. When edited again for redundancies, the final list consisted of 36 statements. These statements were presented in Table 4.3.

The 36 statements were sorted into piles by 17 human service professionals consisting of 10 females and seven males. The sorters were asked to place statements into piles that made sense to them. These sort data were analyzed using multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis.

Table 4.3: 36 Statements Derived from the Interrater Agreement Process for "What do you do to get by?"

Statement
I work at a fast food restaurant
I had to come here from a youth detention centre
just follow the rules here
panhandle
shoplift
my dad brings me money sometimes
steal
friends gave me stuff
I got a food voucher from social services
I stayed with somebody where nobody would know where I was
staying here gives me a warm place to sleep
I was supported by my friend
I am supported by a shelter for homeless youth
stealing food
armed robbery
my dad has always made sure I am taken care of
my dad gives me money or whatever I need
I've always had money
sell drugs for big drug dealers
steal cars and drive to other cities and sell drugs there
scam hotel rooms by using a sim card
steal CD's from a record store and return them for a refund

break and enter

quite heavy into crime

pick up money for pimps from their girls

pick up money for drugs

I was involved in a gang and any time I had a problem me and them took care of it by violence

try not to hurt people

"jack" people

go to one place for a while, then another

I was living with my best friend for a month

I'm just being a bum

steal clothes, valuables that were worth money

beat up people for their clothes

if I want something I can get it because I have a lot of friends who can get it for me or I can get it myself

try to fix myself up so I can go home and live a normal life

Data Analysis

Multidimensional scaling. The initial bit map of the 36 statements generated for question two was presented in Figure 4.3. The concept map of those statements was presented in Figure 4.4. Each of the 36 statements was represented as a point on the map. The placement of the points was derived from the MDS solution; their physical proximity to one another represented the degree to which the statements were sorted into the same or different piles by the 17 human service professionals. Statements sorted into the same piles more frequently were closer to one another on the map than statements that were sorted into different groupings. A cluster analytic technique was performed on the MDS solution to assist in defining themes apparent in the data.

Cluster analysis. The final cluster solution for the concept map for question two was determined by the author with the assistance of the Ph.D. psychologist who was part of the interrater agreement process that resulted in the final 36 statements. The decision regarding the most appropriate number of clusters was based on the conceptual fit of the statements within the various cluster solutions generated, and the items contributing most to the uniqueness of each cluster using the average and individual bridging indices. Cluster solutions from seven to three were considered and a solution of five clusters was considered to be the most appropriate for question two.

Concept Map for Question Two: What do you do to get by?

The initial seven cluster solution appeared too fragmented. Clusters contained few items. The number of clusters was reduced by two. Reducing the seven cluster solution (reproduced in Appendix E) to five, collapsed clusters three and four, and five and six. Further reductions to a four concept solution resulted in the combination of "Personal Development" with "Panhandle" while the three concept solution (reproduced in Appendix E) combined "Personal Development" and "Panhandle" with "Social Service Organizations". Both the four and three concept solutions appeared to be overgeneralized and therefore less useful. The five concept solution (see Figure 4.4) whose items and bridging index values appear in Table 4.4 appeared to provide the best interpretability.

Table 4.4: Cluster Items and Bridging Values for Concept Map of "What do you do to get by?"

Cluster and Statement	Bridging Index
Cluster #1 - Personal Development	0.69
I work at a fast food restaurant	0.66
I've always had money	1.00
try not to hurt people	0.52
try to fix myself up so I can go home and live a normal life	0.58
Cluster #2 - Panhandle	0.61
panhandle	0.50
I'm just being a bum	0.71
Cluster #3 - Social Service Organizations	0.37
I had to come here from a youth detention centre	0.58
just follow the rules here	0.17
I got a food voucher from social services	0.29
I am supported by a shelter for homeless youth	0.22
staying here gives me a warm place to sleep	0.28
go to one place for a while, then another	0.69
Cluster #4 - Support of Family/Friends	0.41
my dad brings me money sometimes	0.38
my dad has always made sure that I am taken care of	0.38
my dad gives me money or whatever I need	0.38
friends gave me stuff	0.52
I stayed with somebody where nobody would know where I was	0.38
I was living with my best friend for a month	0.38

I was supported by my friends	0.37
if I want something I can get it because I have a lot of friends who can get it for me or I can get it myself	0.45
Cluster #5 - Crime	0.03
shoplift	0.00
quite heavy into crime	0.00
steal clothes and valuables that were worth money	0.00
steal CD's from a record store and return them for a refund	0.00
break and enter	0.00
steal	0.00
armed robbery	0.01
beat up people for their clothes	0.02
sell drugs for big drug dealers	0.01
steal cars and drive to other cities and sell drugs there	0.01
pick up money for drugs	0.01
stealing food	0.04
scam hotel rooms using a sim card	0.08
pick up money for pimps from their girls	0.03
"jack" people	0.07
I was involved in a gang and any time I had a problem me and them took care of it by violence	0.23

Cluster one: Personal development. Statements in this cluster were generally indicative of positive adaptations to homelessness. The statements included reference to employment: "I work at a fast food restaurant"; and the attempt to make personal changes that presumably were manifested in leaving home initially: "try to fix myself up so that I can go home and live a normal life". The statement: "try not to hurt people" suggested the

presence of personal awareness of the potential harm to others s/he presented, and the avoidance of circumstances that lead to it.

The statement: "I've always had money" suggested that this individual had consistently had her/his monetary needs met. This statement had a bridging index value of one indicating that it had been sorted into other groupings and could have easily be placed into another cluster. Overall, this cluster had the highest average bridging index suggesting that the statements were likely to have been sorted into nearby clusters.

Cluster two: Panhandle. The statements in this cluster indicated the practice of asking for the assistance of others: "panhandle" and "I'm just being a bum". This cluster obtained the second highest average bridging index value which suggested that the statements were sorted with other nearby clusters.

Cluster three: Social service organizations. Most of the statements in this cluster referred to being assisted by the shelter in which the interviews took place: "I just had to come here from a youth detention centre", "just follow the rules here", "I am supported by a shelter for homeless youth", and "staying here gives me a warm place to sleep".

The statement: "I got a food voucher from social services" described the receipt of some assistance from social services.

The statement: "go to one place for a while then another" described mobility between locations, suggesting the lack of stability and the transient nature of assistance received by these youth. This cluster attained the second lowest average bridging value, suggesting that these statements were associated with some statements nearby on the map.

Cluster four: Support of family/friends. Statements in this cluster represented the assistance of family, and more specifically the father, "to get by" for these youth. These statements included: "my dad brings me money sometimes", and "my dad has always made sure that I am taken care of", and "my dad gives me money or whatever I need".

The assistance of friends was identified in this cluster by statements such as: "friends gave me stuff", and "I was living with my best friends for a month". Another

statement: "I stayed with somebody where nobody would know where I was" indicated the presence of a preference for anonymity in receiving assistance. This cluster attained the second highest average bridging value which suggested that some items were sorted with nearby clusters.

Cluster five: Crime. Youth identified different criminal activities as means "to get by" including theft, drug selling, prostitution, and gang activity. Some statements that indicated theft were: "shoplift", "steal clothes and valuables that were worth money", "steal CD's from a record store and return them for a refund", "break and enter", "steal", and "armed robbery". Selling drugs was indicated by the following statements: "selling drugs for big drug dealers" and "pick up money for drugs". Involvement in the sex trade was indicated by the statement: "pick up money for pimps from their girls". One statement suggested the presence of gang activity: "I was involved in a gang and anytime I had a problem me and them took care of it by violence". This cluster attained the lowest average bridging value which suggested that the items were not often sorted with other groupings on the map.

Figure 4.3: Point Bit Map of 36 Statements for Question Two:

What do you do to get by?

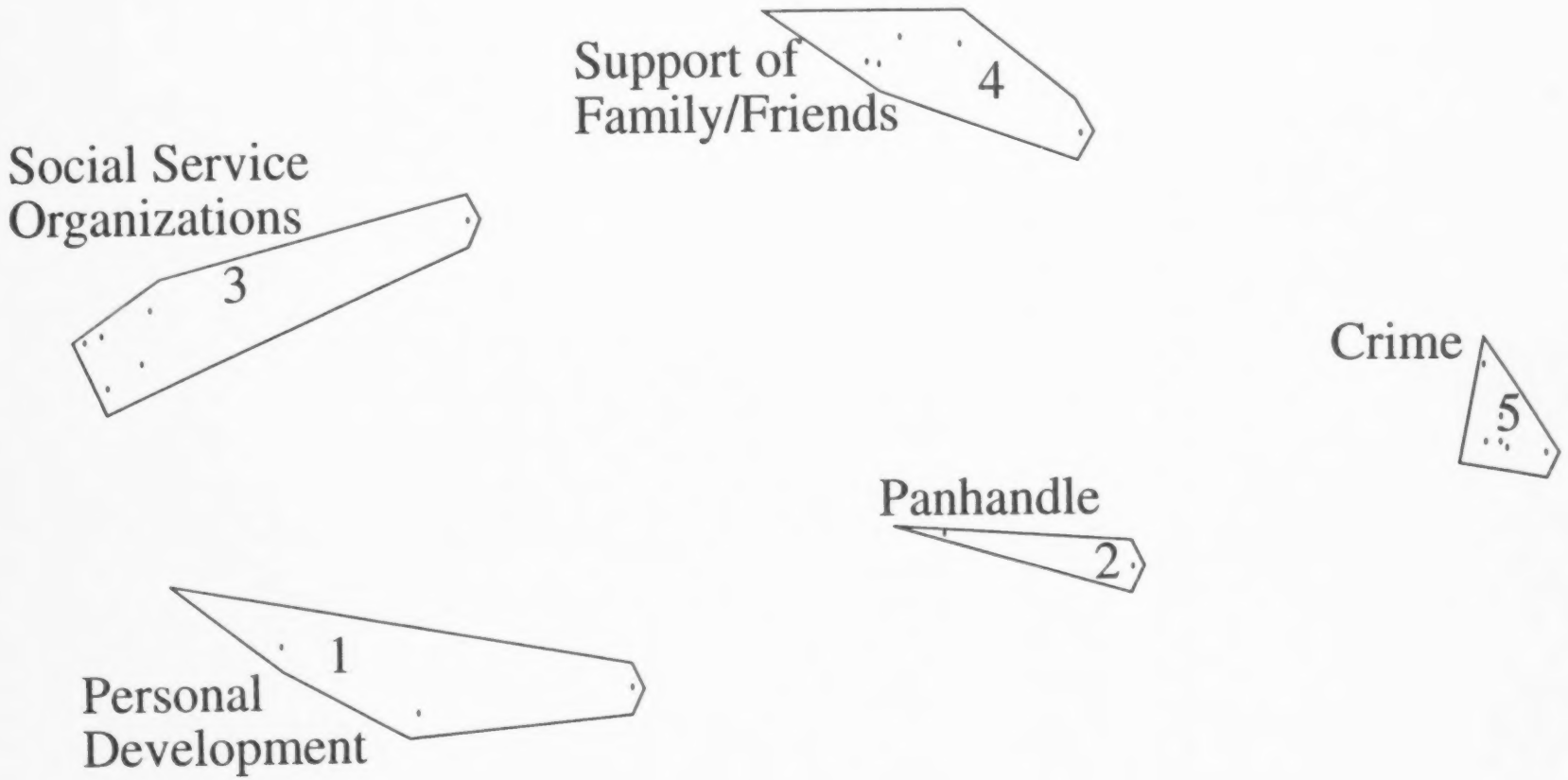

Figure 4.4: Concept Map of 36 Statements for Question Two:

What do you do to get by?

Discussion: Concept Map for Question Two

In relation to the second question "What do you do to get by?" the following general themes were apparent on the concept map. The first general theme indicated initiative related to self improvement with the exception of one statement that seemed to indicate satisfaction and confidence that one would always have enough to get by. The second general theme suggested depending on the goodwill of others through panhandling. The third general theme indicated the use of social assistance organizations and the transitory nature of homelessness. The fourth general theme indicated that friends and family were sources of assistance to these youth. The fifth general theme suggested a variety of criminal activities engaged in by these youth "to get by" including theft, drug selling, prostitution, and gang activity.

Relationship to Previous Research

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents in Edmonton using the concept mapping method. This was done by analyzing the data obtained from clients of a shelter for homeless youth in Edmonton. Question two: "What do you do to get by?", resulted in a concept map with five cluster themes. The five clusters/themes included: personal development, panhandle, social service organizations, support of family/friends, and crime. In the following section, the results of the study are discussed and placed within the literature. The themes and their sub-themes were consistent with the literature on the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents.

Cluster one: Personal development. Statements in this cluster were generally indicative of positive adaptations to homelessness: employment and making personal changes that presumably were manifested in leaving home initially. While the second sub-theme was not specific to a type of personal development, the literature did suggest that some homeless youth attend school, and presumably some of their learning involves life skills.

The literature suggested that many homeless youth maintain the hope of obtaining further education and jobs (Ferguson, 1991). In spite of a number of barriers to employment and education (see Powers & Jaklitsch, 1993) some homeless youth have found jobs (Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992; Smart & Walsh, 1993) and attended school (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992).

Cluster two: Panhandle. The second general theme of panhandling was apparent in the literature. About 2% of the homeless youth surveyed by Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) reported that they met their needs through panhandling.

Cluster three: Social service organizations. The receipt of assistance from social service organizations included reference to shelters for homeless youth, the use of the public social service or welfare system, and moving around between sources of assistance were indicated by the participants and are evidenced in the literature.

The use of independent shelters to meet the needs of homeless youth who were often unaware of other community resources and reluctant to engage the child welfare system has been documented (Kufeldt et al., 1992).

Although only a few of those youth who were be eligible to receive welfare benefits or some income support received it (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). This is partly due to legislation that varied considerably between provinces; in Alberta, legislation was altered in 1985 to re-classify 16 to 18 year olds as ineligible for the standard public assistance program (Kufeldt & Burrows, 1994). Therefore, in Alberta many street youth were left to access supports primarily through the child welfare system.

It has been documented that the nature of homelessness is transient. Youth had often run between family, shelters, institutions, and the street (Hartmann, Burgess, & McCormack, 1987; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). The youth in the Smart and Walsh (1993) study indicated that they had lived at some time: with their biological parents, adoptive parents, in a foster home, in a group home, with other relatives, and in a detention center.

Cluster four: Support of family/friends. The youth indicated that support they received from family and friends served to get them by. This indication was consistent with a study by Kufeldt and Nimmo (1987) which reported that family and friends were identified by the homeless youth surveyed as people they relied on to "meet their needs". McCarthy and Hagan (1992) found that nearly all of the youth they surveyed had made at least one close friend since being on the street.

Cluster five: Crime. The youth reported engaging in different forms of criminal activity that included theft, drug selling, prostitution, and gang activity. These criminal activities have been reported by studies of homeless youth in the literature.

Many runaway and homeless youth have reported stealing. In McCarthy and Hagan's (1992) sample, youth surveyed indicated that they had stolen food or goods worth over $50 since leaving home. A number of youth in Stein et al.'s (1994) sample indicated that they had stolen or shoplifted since leaving home. According to Greenblatt and Robertson's (1993) sample a number of youth reported breaking into homes.

According to Robertson (1989) many homeless youth indicated that they had sold drugs for income, in some cases to support their own drug use.

A significant proportion of runaway youth became involved in the sex trade (Greenblatt & Robertson, 1993). A number of youth reported working as prostitutes since leaving home (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992).

While gang activity itself has not been reported as an adaptive strategy in the adolescent homelessness literature, runaway youth reported making a number of friends on the street (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992), in some cases these friends may be involved in delinquent activities and protect their associates, qualities of some "gang" activities.

CHAPTER 5 - SUMMARY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of leaving home and the adaptive strategies used by homeless adolescents in Edmonton. The literature suggested that homeless youth are among those with underinvolvement in the educational system and overinvolvement in the justice system. Additionally, these youth often have issues that fall within the mandate of the public social service and mental health systems. There are clear gaps in services to this group; homeless youth have not been served well by these systems. The social costs of ignoring this population are staggering. It is incumbent upon us as a society to address in a more comprehensive manner the needs of youth who are already or may become homeless. Thus, to aid in applied research and service initiatives in this time of public accountability it seemed timely to ask youth to describe their experiences so that this knowledge could be systematically used to strengthen existing services, inspire additional creative service initiatives, and to make service gaps for homeless adolescents more visible.

Method

Concept mapping provides a means of organizing variables into a series of underlying themes. The utility of this approach for the investigation of psychological phenomena has been its ability to apply objective analysis to phenomenological data; the process combines the credibility of qualitative data with the objectivity and rigor of quantitative analysis.

Two delimitations of this method were identified. The sort data were reflective of the way in which the statements given by the youth were associated and not indicative of their prevalence; no prevalence data could be gleaned from the findings. Data was collected until no new statements appeared; the size of the sample was judged to be sufficient for this purpose.

A series of statements were gathered from participants who resided at a shelter for homeless youth in response to two questions: "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?" and "What do you do to get by?" A group of human service professionals were asked to sort the statements according to the statement similarities. These sort data were analyzed using multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis.

Results

In response to the first question "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?" five themes emerged: crime, independence, pushed out, family conflict, and family violence. The first general theme indicated the presence of criminal activity on the part of the youth her/himself; the youth indicated involvement in theft, drug selling, and substance using. The second general theme suggested the desire or causes for the youths' independence from, or the need for separation from her/his parents, due, for some, to parental substance abuse and value differences. The third general theme reflected the presence of active urging or coercion by parents as reasons why these youth left home, with some indication of the reasons for the precipitating events. The fourth theme reflected high degrees of verbal and physical family conflict between stepparent and youth, parent and youth, and between siblings. The fifth general theme indicated the presence of emotional and physical abuse as reasons why the youth left home.

In response to the second question "What do you do to get by?" five themes emerged: personal development, panhandle, social service organizations, support of family/friends, and crime. The first general theme indicated initiative related to self improvement with the exception of one statement that seemed to indicate satisfaction and confidence that one would always have enough to get by. The second general theme suggested depending on the goodwill of others through panhandling. The third general theme indicated the use of social assistance organizations and the transitory nature of homelessness. The fourth general theme indicated that friends and family are sources of assistance to these youth. The fifth general theme suggested a variety of criminal activities

engaged in by these youth "to get by" including theft, drug selling, prostitution, and gang activity.

While there appeared to be considerable agreement between the emergent themes and the literature, differences were noted: reasons for leaving home and adaptive strategies utilized by those participating in the study could not be clearly differentiated between males and females; there was no evidence of sexual abuse as a reason for leaving home among the themes generated. Additionally, there was a great deal of variability among the causes and adaptive strategies indicated by individual participants; not all individuals participated in all themes.

Future Directions for Research

Additional research could examine the proportions of homeless youth endorsing the experiential themes identified as well as investigate hypothetical relationships between themes. Such research could involve a systematic and larger sample from different locations in Edmonton.

The literature on adolescent homelessness suggested that there were gender differences in the frequency of both the causes and adaptive strategies utilized by homeless adolescents. Research into the quantitative differences on the experiential themes identified in this study between genders could be undertaken.

Implications for Practice

The results of the present study indicate the complex nature of the causes and effects of adolescent homeless in Edmonton. The complex interaction between personal, family and community variables cannot be overlooked nor can the variety of ways that youth respond and adapt to their situation of homelessness.

The familial influences whether causes or consequences of personal or community factors were described in substantial detail by the participants. The abundance of literature related to family factors as causes of adolescent homelessness is also quite highly

developed. The family thus seems to be a highly visible target for prevention or intervention when appropriate or possible.

Consistent with previous research it seemed apparent that runaway youth are moving between family, shelters, institutions, and the street (Hartmann, Burgess, & McCormack, 1987; McCarthy & Hagan, 1992; Smart & Walsh, 1993). Their lifestyles were characterized by instability and transience. This would seem to fit within the mandate of an integrated services model, where youth could access what is most relevant and appropriate for their situation.

Currently, needs are being addressed by shelters for homeless youth (Kufeldt & Nimmo, 1987) and at the same time, the public welfare and child protection systems are becoming less accessible by youth requesting assistance (Kufeldt & Burrows, 1994). It should be noted that a high value was placed by the participants on the shelter in which they resided at the time of the interview; there is clearly a need for this service for youth who find themselves homeless in Edmonton.

Youth described a variety of criminal behaviors engaged in "to get by". This places responsibility for these youth on the justice system when they are caught. The frequently survival nature of this behavior requires sensitivity on the part of the program staff in the agencies they are likely to come into contact with. A punishment response to that behavior is unlikely to be helpful.

In conclusion, this study suggests that the lives of homeless adolescents are fraught with challenges apparently both prior to as well as following running away. It is incumbent upon the families of these youth as well as service professionals and the agencies or institutions they may be involved with to recognize the complexity of causes and effects of this phenomenon. Additionally, it seems relevant and useful for social policy and agency practice to be oriented toward providing comprehensive service in prevention or response to these multi-problem situations. In doing so, perhaps fewer of our children will be without a place to call home.

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APPENDIX A

Unedited Responses by Gender and Question

Females: What are the reasons you see for leaving home?

- religious differences
- when I first left home I met a guy who was Muslim and I accepted it at the same time my mom turned to Christianity
- my mom was a 24 hour extremist Christian
- drugs in the home
- a lot of conflict between my mother and I
- I moved in with my boyfriend, it didn't work out and I couldn't go home
- my mom's husband does pot and stuff openly, and I'm against it
- I don't think home is the right environment for me
- my family
- my dad's an alcoholic
- my mom and I hate each other
- my mom and dad fight
- my dad hit me
- my dad drinks too much
- my mom and dad are going through a separation and I just don't want to be around them
- my mom kicked me out because of my drug addiction
- my mom and I just fought all the time
- my mom and I got at each other I guess
- I got kicked out of school
- me and my dad and my sister do not get along whatsoever
- I'm the youngest child and I'd get in more trouble than my sister
- when I got into trouble I'd get hit
- my parents pushed me out because they didn't want me
- things have been rough since I can remember
- my parents were emotionally abusive
- I was always a bad kid
- I got into fist fights with my mom
- my mom and I tried to kill each other once
- abuse
- hitting with broomsticks, metal spoons, whatever they could get hold of
- put-downs
- shut-downs

Females: What do you do to get by?

- I was supported by my boyfriend
- I am supported by a shelter for homeless youth
- panhandle

- shoplift
- my dad brings me money sometimes
- for a while I was selling drugs but I quit that
- I'm just being a bum, living here
- when I first got kicked out I was living with my best friend for a month
- live here
- do crime
- stealing just about anything
- try not to hurt people, but everything we do hurts people one way or another
- armed robbery
- shoplifting
- jack people
- break and enter
- car theft
- go to one place for a while, then another, until I ran out of places to go
- steal because I couldn't get any money
- friends gave me stuff
- I got a food voucher from social services
- I stayed with somebody that nobody knew so that nobody would know where I was
- staying here gives me a warm place to sleep

Males: What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

- I didn't get along with my mom
- I didn't get along with my sister
- my mom would rather have my sister around than me
- I could go live with my dad right now except that he does not have a house right now
- even though I told my mom I wasn't hungry, she made me a meal...and when I told her that I was not hungry she got angry and started shouting and throwing stuff
- I got angry and started punching stuff
- my dad's girlfriend did not want me around so I got kicked out
- I was always alone with my mom when I was small because my dad was always on the road
- me and my mom, we'd always start scrapping, and yell and hit
- my mom tried to control me
- I like to do my own thing
- sometimes I'd get mad over little things
- it's hard to be around my mom and sister for long
- because I was getting into trouble
- shoplifting
- smoking dope

- I'm going to court for theft and it keeps getting held over
- time to get away from each other
- separately work things out before it becomes a bigger problem
- I got into an argument with my step-dad
- my step-dad got drunk the night before, came home early in the morning and started pushing me around
- me and my step-dad have had arguments in the past
- I don't feel safe going back
- I never left home, I got kicked out
- I got into too much trouble with the law
- theft charges
- my drug use
- I never got along with my mom, we were always fighting about something
- I stole alcohol from my place and gave it to minors - I got charged for that
- I was dealing drugs for 2 or 3 years off and on
- I kept on stealing from home, and anywhere else
- I was beating up people
- I was involved in a lot of criminal acts that I never got caught for
- if I were my parents I would have kicked me out a long time ago
- I chose to leave home
- me and my mom couldn't get along
- me and my mom fought about everything
- I wouldn't do my chores, or I'd do them late
- keeping my shoes on in the house
- me and my mom would fight about money
- I had a job and was paying rent, and when I quit my mom got real mad and we'd fight about money
- my parents couldn't deal with me
- my parents couldn't deal with my negative acting out
- in grade 6 I was selling salt and passing it off as drugs
- stealing money from my mom
- getting drunk
- my mom hardly knew where I was
- I left home at the age of 11, lived on the streets, in group homes and foster homes ever since
- me and my mom just didn't get along
- my mom called the cops on me a lot
- starting fires
- selling drugs
- breaking into homes
- my mom used to cut me down a lot

my mom stopped hitting me when I got too big for her

Males: What do you do to get by?

- my dad has always made sure I am taken care of
- my dad gives me money or whatever I need
- I've always had money
- I work at a fast food restaurant
- the social service organization helped me out: gave me a place to sleep and a towel, toothbrush, a pair of sweats, and referred me here
- I had to come here from a youth detention centre
- just follow the rules here
- steal clothes, valuables that were worth money
- beat up people for their clothes
- if I want something I can get it because I have a lot of friends who can get it for me or I can get it myself
- try to fix myself up so I can go home and live a normal life like a normal teenager would do
- mostly panhandle
- stealing food
- armed robbery
- sell drugs for big drug dealers
- steal cars and drive to other cities and sell drugs there
- scam hotel rooms by using a sim card
- steal CD's from a record store and return them for a refund
- break and enter's
- quite heavy into crime
- pick up money for pimps from their girls
- pick up money for drugs
- I was involved in a gang called Brown Nation, and any time I had a problem me and them took care of it by violence

APPENDIX B

Edited Responses by Gender and Question

Females: What are the reasons you see for leaving home?

- religious differences
- my mom was an extremist Christian
- drugs in the home
- a lot of conflict between my mother and I
- I moved in with my boyfriend, it didn't work out and I couldn't go home
- my mom's husband does pot and stuff openly
- my family
- my dad's an alcoholic
- my mom and I hate each other
- my mom and dad fight
- my dad hit me
- my dad drinks too much
- my mom and dad are going through a separation
- my mom kicked me out because of my drug addiction
- my mom and I just fought all the time
- I got kicked out of school
- me and my dad and my sister do not get along whatsoever
- when I got into trouble I'd get hit
- my parents pushed me out because they didn't want me
- I was always a bad kid
- I got into fist fights with my mom
- my mom and I tried to kill each other once
- abuse
- hitting with whatever they could get hold of
- put-downs
- shut-downs

Females: What do you do to get by?

- I was supported by my boyfriend
- I am supported by a shelter for homeless youth
- panhandle
- shoplift
- my dad brings me money sometimes
- for a while I was selling drugs
- I'm just being a bum
- I was living with my best friend for a month
- live here
- try not to hurt people

- armed robbery
- shoplifting
- jack people
- break and enter
- car theft
- go to one place for a while, then another
- steal
- friends gave me stuff
- I got a food voucher from social services
- I stayed with somebody that nobody knew so that nobody would know where I was
- staying here gives me a warm place to sleep

Males: What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

- I didn't get along with my mom
- I didn't get along with my sister
- my mom would rather have my sister around than me
- I could go live with my dad right now except that he does not have a house right now
- my mom got angry and started shouting and throwing stuff
- I got angry and started punching stuff
- my dad's girlfriend did not want me around
- me and my mom, we'd always yell and hit
- my mom tried to control me
- I like to do my own thing
- sometimes I'd get mad over little things
- it's hard to be around my mom and sister for long
- because I was getting into trouble
- shoplifting
- smoking dope
- I'm going to court for theft and it keeps getting held over
- time to get away from each other
- separately work things out before it becomes a bigger problem
- I got into an argument with my step-dad
- my step-dad came home early in the morning and started pushing me around
- me and my step-dad have had arguments in the past
- I don't feel safe going back
- I got kicked out
- I got into too much trouble with the law
- theft charges

- my drug use
- I never got along with my mom
- I stole alcohol from my place and gave it to minors - I got charged for that
- I was dealing drugs for 2 or 3 years off and on
- I kept on stealing from home, and anywhere else
- I was beating up people
- I was involved in a lot of criminal acts
- if I were my parents I would have kicked me out a long time ago
- I chose to leave home
- me and my mom couldn't get along
- me and my mom fought about everything
- I wouldn't do my chores, or I'd do them late
- keeping my shoes on in the house
- me and my mom would fight about money
- I had a job and was paying rent, and when I quit my mom got real mad and we'd fight about money
- my parents couldn't deal with me
- my parent's couldn't deal with my negative acting out
- in grade 6 I was selling salt and passing it off as drugs
- stealing money from my mom
- getting drunk
- my mom hardly knew where I was
- I left home at the age of 11, lived on the streets, in group homes and foster homes ever since
- me and my mom just didn't get along
- my mom called the cops on me a lot
- starting fires
- selling drugs
- breaking into homes
- my mom used to cut me down a lot
- my mom stopped hitting me when I got too big for her

<u>Males: What do you do to get by?</u>

- my dad has always made sure I am taken care of
- my dad gives me money or whatever I need
- I've always had money
- I work at a fast food restaurant
- the social service organization helped me out: gave me a place to sleep and a towel, toothbrush, a pair of sweats, and referred me here
- I had to come here from a youth detention centre
- just follow the rules here

- steal clothes, valuables that were worth money
- beat up people for their clothes
- if I want something I can get it because I have a lot of friends who can get it for me or I can get it myself
- try to fix myself up so I can go home and live a normal life like a normal teenager would do
- mostly panhandle
- stealing food
- armed robbery
- sell drugs for big drug dealers
- steal cars and drive to other cities and sell drugs there
- scam hotel rooms by using a sim card
- steal CD's from a record store and return them for a refund
- break and enter's
- quite heavy into crime
- pick up money for pimps from their girls
- pick up money for drugs
- I was involved in a gang called Brown Nation, and any time I had a problem me and them took care of it by violence

APPENDIX C

Instructions to Sorters

Enclosed you will find two sets of cards.

Recorded on the cards are responses to two questions asked of homeless youth.

The cards with the orange cover are responses to Question #1: What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?
The cards with the green cover are responses to Question #2: What do you do to get by?

Please follow this procedure for each stack of cards separately:

1) Read through the cards in the stack.

2) Sort the cards into piles in a way that makes sense to you (place similar statements together into the same pile).

3) Record the sorting information on the back of this page. For each pile, identify the statement number(s) of those it contains. You may have as many piles as you wish (except that there should be more than 1 pile and less than 75 for Question #1 and more than 1 pile and less than 36 for Question #2). Although space has been made for a number of piles on the reverse of this page, use only as many as you require, and add more piles than are listed if necessary. If you wish, you can attach a label to each pile.

Example:

pile #	statement numbers
pile 1:	2, 6, 10
pile 2:	8
pile 3:	34, 25, 37, 11, 13, etc.

If you believe that a statement is unrelated to all of the others, it can be placed alone in its own pile.

There are no wrong or right groupings.

You may find that the statements can be grouped in several different ways - choose the way which seems best to you.

If you have any questions please call Jason Brown at 425-1847.

THANK-YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!!

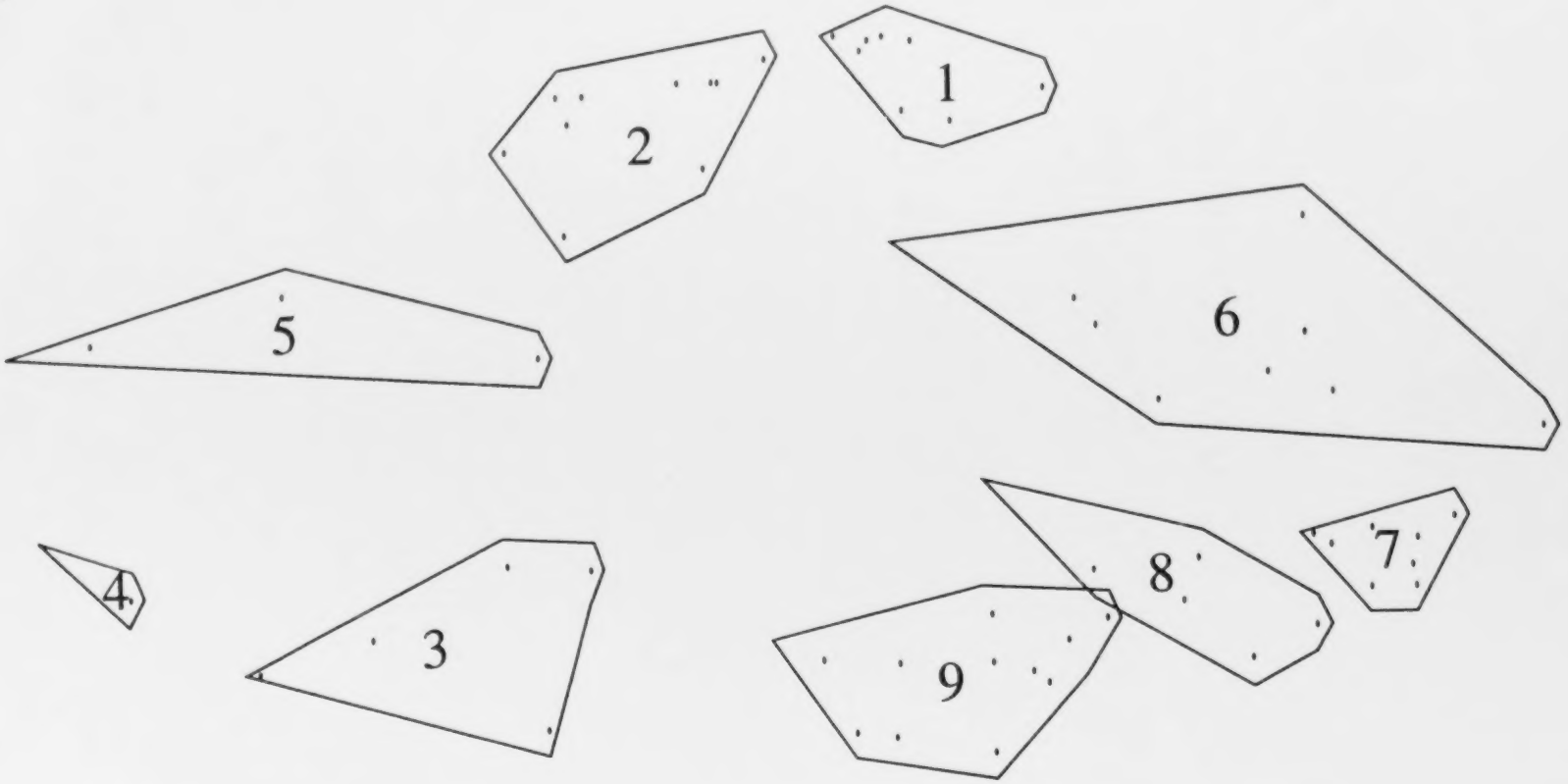
Jason

Sort #____

Question #1	Question #2
Pile 1:	Pile 1:
Pile 2:	Pile 2:
Pile 3:	Pile 3:
Pile 4:	Pile 4:
Pile 5:	Pile 5:
Pile 6:	Pile 6:
Pile 7:	Pile 7:
Pile 8:	Pile 8:
Pile 9:	Pile 9:
Pile 10:	Pile 10:
Pile 11:	Pile 11:
Pile 12:	Pile 12:
Pile 13:	Pile 13:
Pile 14:	Pile 14:
Pile 15:	Pile 15:
Pile 16:	Pile 16:
Pile 17:	Pile 17:
Pile 18:	Pile 18:
Pile 19:	
Pile 20:	
Pile 21:	
Pile 22:	
Pile 23:	

APPENDIX D

Nine and Three Cluster Solutions for Question One



Nine Concept Map of 75 Statements for Question One:

What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

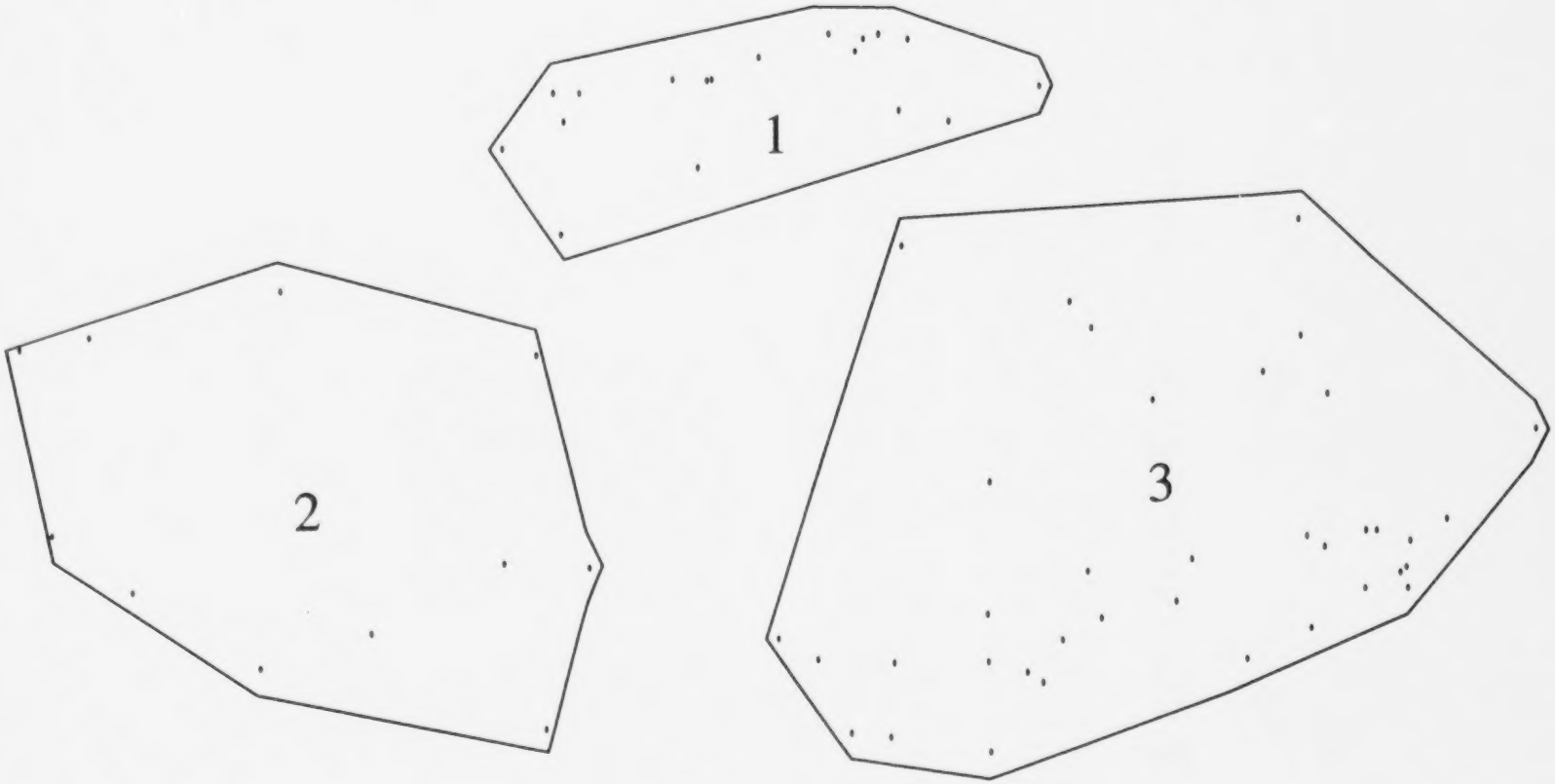
Items and Bridging Values for Nine Cluster Solution for Concept Map of "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?"

Cluster and Statement	Bridging Index
Cluster #1 Average	0.07
because I was getting into trouble	0.21
I was beating up people	0.17
stealing money from my mom	0.24
shoplifting	0.00
breaking into homes	0.00
I got into too much trouble with the law	0.02
I was involved in a lot of criminal acts	0.03
theft charges	0.03
I kept on stealing from home, and anywhere else	0.03
starting fires	0.02
Cluster #2 Average	0.17
smoking dope	0.12
getting drunk	0.16
my drug use	0.14
my drug addiction	0.14
sometimes I'd get mad over little things	0.35
I got angry and started punching stuff	0.26
I was always a bad kid	0.49
in grade six I was selling salt and passing it off as drugs	0.05
selling drugs	0.06
I was dealing drugs	0.05

I got kicked out of school	0.13
I stole alcohol from my place and gave it to minors	0.05
Cluster #3 Average	0.71
time to get away from each other	0.95
shut-downs	1.00
religious differences	0.76
my dad is an alcoholic	0.50
my dad drinks too much	0.50
my mom's husband does pot and stuff openly	0.55
Cluster #4 Average	0.91
separately work things out before it becomes a bigger problem	0.98
I like to do my own thing	0.84
Cluster #5 Average	0.72
drugs in the home	0.65
keeping my shoes on in the house	0.72
I moved in with my friend and it didn't work out	0.77
I chose to leave home	0.74
Cluster #6 Average	0.42
I got kicked out	0.43
my parents could not deal with my negative acting out	0.45
I wouldn't do my chores, or I'd do them late	0.44
my mom called the cops on me a lot	0.54
I had a job and was paying rent, I quit and my mom got real mad	0.41
I got into fist fights with my mom	0.41
my mom kicked me out	0.34
my parents could not deal with me	0.37
my mom hardly knew where I was	0.42

Cluster #7 Average	0.12
I never got along with my mom	0.10
it's hard to be around my mom and sister for long	0.15
me and my mom fight about everything	0.08
my mom and I just fought all the time	0.08
me and my mom would fight about money	0.08
my mom and I hate each other	0.08
a lot of conflict between my mother and I	0.09
my mom tried to control me	0.16
my family	0.19
I didn't get along with my sister	0.13
my mom would rather have my sister around than me	0.14
me and my dad and my sister do not get along whatsoever	0.15
Cluster #8 Average	0.18
my mom got angry and started throwing stuff	0.13
me and my mom, we'd always yell and hit	0.12
my mom and I tried to kill each other once	0.13
when I got into trouble I'd get hit	0.30
my dad's girlfriend did not want me around	0.22
I got into an argument with my step-dad	0.16
me and my step-dad have arguments	0.16
Cluster #9 Average	0.23
my mom and dad fight	0.31
my mom and dad are going through a separation	0.36
my mom was an extremist Christian	0.41
abuse	0.31
I don't feel safe there	0.27

put-downs	0.31
my dad hit me	0.13
my step-dad came home and started pushing me around	0.12
hitting me with whatever they could get a hold of	0.11
my parents were emotionally abusive	0.13
my mom used to cut me down a lot	0.15
my mom stopped hitting me when I got too big for her	0.12
my parents pushed me out because they didn't want me	0.26



Three Concept Map of 75 Statements for Question One:

What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?

Items and Bridging Values for Three Cluster Solution for Concept Map of "What were the reasons that you see for leaving home?"

Cluster and Statement	Bridging Index
Cluster #1 Average	0.12
because I was getting into trouble	0.21
I was beating up people	0.17
stealing money from my mom	0.24
shoplifting	0.00
breaking into homes	0.00
I got into too much trouble with the law	0.02
I was involved in a lot of criminal acts	0.03
theft charges	0.03
I kept on stealing from home, and anywhere else	0.03
starting fires	0.02
smoking dope	0.12
getting drunk	0.16
my drug use	0.14
my drug addiction	0.14
sometimes I'd get mad over little things	0.35
I got angry and started punching stuff	0.26
I was always a bad kid	0.49
in grade six I was selling salt and passing it off as drugs	0.05
selling drugs	0.06
I was dealing drugs	0.05
I got kicked out of school	0.13

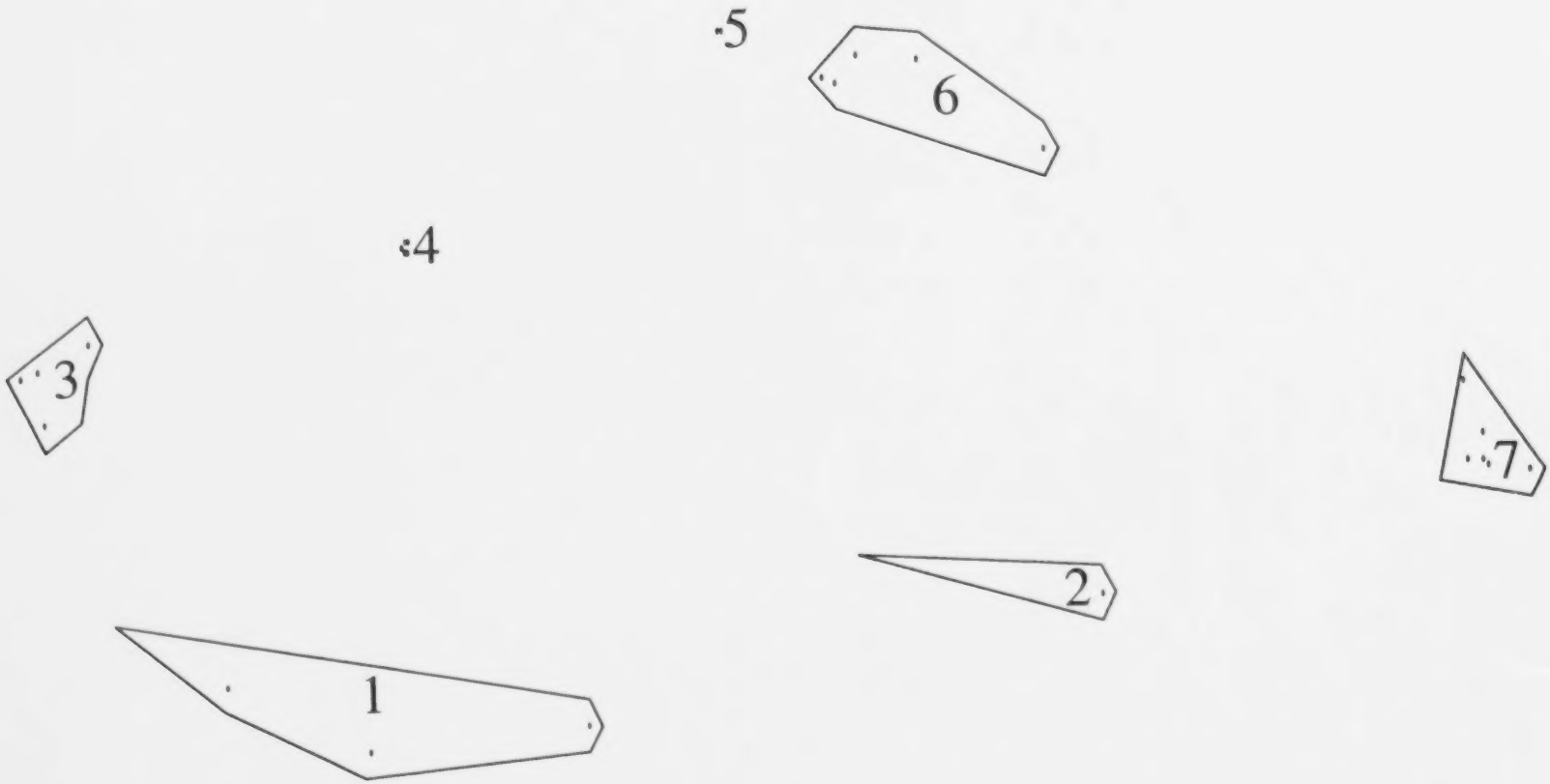
I stole alcohol from my place and gave it to minors	0.05
Cluster #2 Average	0.75
time to get away from each other	0.95
shut-downs	1.00
religious differences	0.76
my dad is an alcoholic	0.50
my dad drinks too much	0.50
my mom's husband does pot and stuff openly	0.55
separately work things out before it becomes a bigger problem	0.98
I like to do my own thing	0.84
drugs in the home	0.65
keeping my shoes on in the house	0.72
I moved in with my friend and it didn't work out	0.77
I chose to leave home	0.74
Cluster #3 Average	0.23
I got kicked out	0.43
my parents could not deal with my negative acting out	0.45
I wouldn't do my chores, or I'd do them late	0.44
my mom called the cops on me a lot	0.54
I had a job and was paying rent, I quit and my mom got real mad	0.41
I got into fist fights with my mom	0.41
my mom kicked me out	0.34
my parents could not deal with me	0.37
my mom hardly knew where I was	0.42
I never got along with my mom	0.10
it's hard to be around my mom and sister for long	0.15
me and my mom fight about everything	0.08

my mom and I just fought all the time	0.08
me and my mom would fight about money	0.08
my mom and I hate each other	0.08
a lot of conflict between my mother and I	0.09
my mom tried to control me	0.16
my family	0.19
I didn't get along with my sister	0.13
my mom would rather have my sister around than me	0.14
me and my dad and my sister do not get along whatsoever	0.15
my mom got angry and started throwing stuff	0.13
me and my mom, we'd always yell and hit	0.12
my mom and I tried to kill each other once	0.13
when I got into trouble I'd get hit	0.30
my dad's girlfriend did not want me around	0.22
I got into an argument with my step-dad	0.16
me and my step-dad have arguments	0.16
my mom and dad fight	0.31
my mom and dad are going through a separation	0.36
my mom was an extremist Christian	0.41
abuse	0.31
I don't feel safe there	0.27
put-downs	0.31
my dad hit me	0.13
my step-dad came home and started pushing me around	0.12
hitting me with whatever they could get a hold of	0.11
my parents were emotionally abusive	0.13
my mom used to cut me down a lot	0.15

my mom stopped hitting me when I got too big for her	0.12
my parents pushed me out because they didn't want me	0.26

APPENDIX E

Seven and Three Cluster Solutions for Question Two



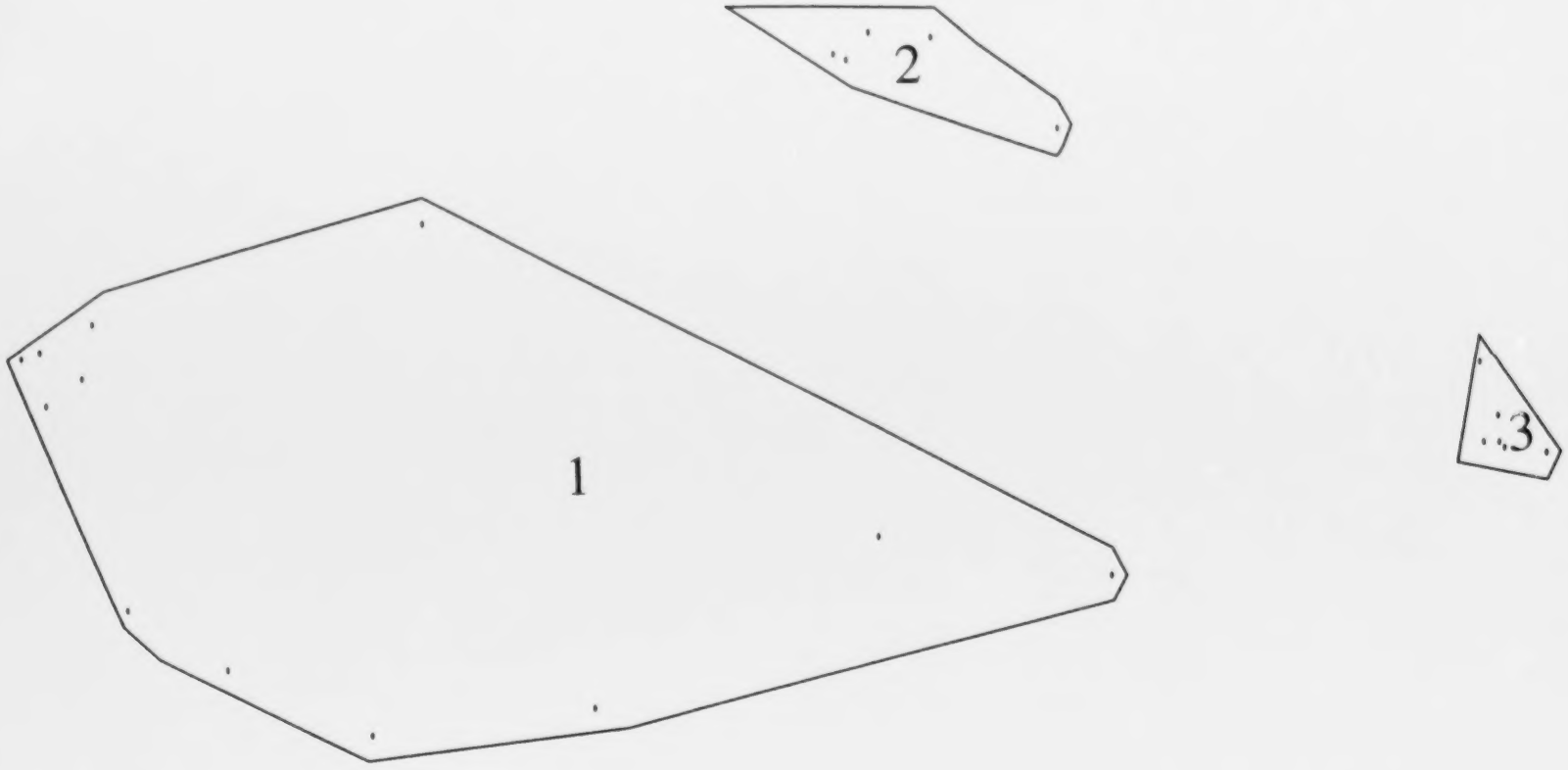
Seven Concept Map of 36 Statements for Question Two:

What do you do to get by?

Items and Bridging Values for Seven Concept Map of "What do you do to get by?"

Cluster and Statement	Bridging Index
Cluster #1 Average	0.69
I work at a fast food restaurant	0.66
I've always had money	1.00
try not to hurt people	0.52
try to fix myself up so I can go home and live a normal life	0.58
Cluster #2 Average	0.61
panhandle	0.50
I'm just being a bum	0.71
Cluster #3 Average	0.31
I had to come here from a youth detention centre	0.58
just follow the rules here	0.17
I got a food voucher from social services	0.29
I am supported by a shelter for homeless youth	0.22
staying here gives me a warm place to sleep	0.28
Cluster #4 Average	0.69
go to one place for a while, then another	0.69
Cluster #5 Average	0.38
my dad brings me money sometimes	0.38
my dad has always made sure that I am taken care of	0.38
my dad gives me money or whatever I need	0.38
Cluster #6 Average	0.42
friends gave me stuff	0.52
I stayed with somebody where nobody would know where I was	0.38

I was living with my best friend for a month	0.38
I was supported by my friends	0.37
if I want something I can get it because I have a lot of friends who can get it for me or I can get it myself	0.45
Cluster #7 Average	0.03
shoplift	0.00
quite heavy into crime	0.00
steal clothes and valuables that were worth money	0.00
steal CD's from a record store and return them for a refund	0.00
break and enter	0.00
steal	0.00
armed robbery	0.01
beat up people for their clothes	0.02
sell drugs for big drug dealers	0.01
steal cars and drive to other cities and sell drugs there	0.01
pick up money for drugs	0.01
stealing food	0.04
scam hotel rooms using a sim card	0.08
pick up money for pimps from their girls	0.03
"jack" people	0.07
I was involved in a gang and any time I had a problem me and them took care of it by violence	0.23



Three Concept Map of 36 Statements for Question Two:

What do you do to get by?

Items and Bridging Values for Three Concept Map of "What do you do to get by?"

Cluster and Statement	Bridging Index
Cluster #1 Average	0.52
I work at a fast food restaurant	0.66
I've always had money	1.00
try not to hurt people	0.52
try to fix myself up so I can go home and live a normal life	0.58
panhandle	0.50
I'm just being a bum	0.71
I had to come here from a youth detention centre	0.58
just follow the rules here	0.17
I got a food voucher from social services	0.29
I am supported by a shelter for homeless youth	0.22
staying here gives me a warm place to sleep	0.28
go to one place for a while, then another	0.69
Cluster #2 Average	0.41
my dad brings me money sometimes	0.38
my dad has always made sure that I am taken care of	0.38
my dad gives me money or whatever I need	0.38
friends gave me stuff	0.52
I stayed with somebody where nobody would know where I was	0.38
I was living with my best friend for a month	0.38
I was supported by my friends	0.37
if I want something I can get it because I have a lot of friends who can get it for me or I can get it myself	0.45
Cluster #3 Average	0.03

shoplift	0.00
quite heavy into crime	0.00
steal clothes and valuables that were worth money	0.00
steal CD's from a record store and return them for a refund	0.00
break and enter	0.00
steal	0.00
armed robbery	0.01
beat up people for their clothes	0.02
sell drugs for big drug dealers	0.01
steal cars and drive to other cities and sell drugs there	0.01
pick up money for drugs	0.01
stealing food	0.04
scam hotel rooms using a sim card	0.08
pick up money for pimps from their girls	0.03
"jack" people	0.07
I was involved in a gang and any time I had a problem me and them took care of it by violence	0.23